

Journal kept by Hugh Finley, surveyor of the post roads on the continent of North America during his survey of the post offices between Falmouth and Casco Bay in the province of Massachusetts and Savannah in Georgia

JOURNAL KEPT BY HUGH FINLAY.

150 COPIES.

No. 25

Journal kept by Hugh Finlay, Surveyor of the Post Roads on the Continent of North America, during his Survey of the Post Offices between Falmouth and Casco Bay in the Province of Massachusetts, and Savannah in Georgia; begun the 13th Sepr. 1773 and ended 26th June 1774.

BROOKLYN: PUBLISHED BY FRANK H. NORTON.

1867.

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INTRODUCTION.

“ Finlay's Journal, ” a Ms. of 84 pp., written in a small, exceedingly neat, and perfectly legible hand, bound in official vellum, and illustrated with two pen-and-ink maps, and a small vignette drawing, came into my possession in this wise.

One John Hawkins, an Englishman, and a professor of the Swedenborgian faith, was sent out to this country about the year 1854, by that sect, as is supposed with a design to propagate the belief in the United States.

He does not seem to have met with distinguished success, either in religious or secular matters, for while there is no record of his having made converts on the one part, it is certain that having entered into business, he failed dismally on the other, and his belongings were sold at auction.

Among various documents, correspondence and other writings that fell into the possession of the auctioneer, was this manuscript, which was brought to me early in October last by his son, and from whom I at once purchased it, perceiving, as I thought, that it must possess some intrinsic value.

A careful reading of it, and conversation with various gentlemen upon whose judgment in such matters I could rely, confirmed me in my opinion, and induced me to print a small edition of the work by subscription.

In printing this edition I have adhered rigidly to the original, so that the book is a true copy of the Ms. of Hugh Finlay, *verbatim et literatim, et punctuatim*.

While I did not bind myself in my announcement to add anything of my own to the book, I yet had it in view to give some slight sketch appropriate to the subject, and to make such illustrations and explanatory notes as might occur to me.

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This intention I propose to carry out in the present introduction, not with any view of completeness, or even of historical accuracy, because my sources of information are meagre and impossible to verify; but simply with a design to throw some light on the whole question as an important one in the history of the formation of our body politic.

The following quotation will give a good idea of the condition of postal communication in the colonies, prior to the establishment of an organized post office.

“In the American Colonies,* the postal service began thus: Letters arriving from beyond the sea were usually delivered on board the ship into the hands of the persons to whom they were addressed; every family sending a member on board for the purpose of receiving letters. Letters not called for were taken by the captain to a coffee-house near the wharf, where they lay spread out on a table, waiting the coming of their owners. Persons coming from adjacent settlements called at the coffee-house and carried away not only their own letters, but all the letters belonging to people in the neighborhood, which they either delivered in person, or deposited at the house of the minister or magistrate, or some relative of the individual to whom the letter was addressed.

* Parton's Life of Franklin, vol 1, p. 330. New York, 1864.

“Hence, the custom grew of depositing at the ship coffee-house, letters written in the town and destined to a place in the interior, as well as letters brought from the country and directed to an inhabitant of the town. As the settlements grew in number and magnitude it became usual to leave letters directed to one of them at the inn most frequented by the inhabitants of that settlement.

“Thus, several years before there was a post-office or a post-rider in the colonies, a rude, slow, unsafe, but neighborly system of letter delivery had sprung up; and long after the establishment of a post-office, this neighborly method continued to be the main dependence of the people for the transportation of letters for short distances.”

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Massachusetts seems to have been foremost in the establishment of a legal postal system, since in the year 1639, the General Court of that colony issued the following decree:

“It is Ordered, that notice be given that Richard Fairbanks, his house in Boston, is the place appointed for all letters which are brought from beyond the seas, or are to be sent thither, to be left with him; and he is to take care that they are to be delivered or sent according to the directions; and he is allowed for every letter a penny, and he must answer all miscarriages through his own neglect in this kind.”

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In Virginia the colonial law of 1657, required every planter to provide a messenger to convey the despatches as they arrived, to the next plantation and so on, on pain of forfeiting a hogshead of tobacco for default.

In 1672, the government of New York established a monthly mail to Boston, advertising,

“Those that be disposed to send letters, to bring them to the Secretary's Office, where in a locked box they shall be preserved till the messenger calls for them; all persons paying the post before the bagg be sealed up.”*

Thirty years later this monthly post had become a fortnightly one, as we see by the following paragraph in the *Boston News Letter* .

* Miles' History of the Post Office. London.

“By order of the Postmaster General of North America. These are to give notice, that on Monday night the 6th of December, the Western Post between Boston and New York sets out once a fortnight, the three winter months of December, January and February, and to go alternately from Boston to Saybrook and Hartford to exchange the mail of letters with the New York Ryder the first turn for Saybrook, to meet the New York Ryder on Saturday

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night, the 11th currant; and the second turn he sets out at Boston on Monday night the 20th currant, to meet the New York Ryder at Hartford, on Saturday night the 25th currant, to exchange mails; and all persons who send letters from Boston to Connecticut from and after the 13th instant, are hereby notified first to pay the postage on the same.”†

† Buckingham's Specimens of Newspaper Literature.

1674. CONNECTICUT.

“[*Before General Court, Hartford 1674.*]

“This Court being made sensible of the great damage that may accrue to the publique by a liberty or boldness which some persons may take to themselves (when employed by order of authority for the conveyance of letters, post, and other important occasions of this colony) by profuse and extravagant spending at the ordinaries and other places on the road upon the countryes acct, and allso by great delayes on journeyes, very prejudiciall to the colony, which willing to prevent, doe therefore order that the allowance for those persons (who shall be employed on such service) for their wages and expences of themselves and horses, shall be as followeth, from the first of May to the middle of October: [here follows a long list of prices at various places, too extensive to copy.]

“And from the middle of October to the last of Aprill, to be eight pence more than the above, for every night they lye out, for oates to the horses, wherein great care is to be had by the ordinary keepers, that hyred horses are not deprived of their allowance. Allso, the viii. differences in the abovesayed sums is to be the stated wages from towne to towne, if they goe not to Hartford; and the like proportion by the mile to those whoe shall be employed in this Colony where their wages is not stated.

“It is further ordered, that all posts their ferridge shall be on the country account, and that the ordinary keepers in the respective plantations shall provide suitable accomodations for men and horse, whose allowance for the man by the meale shall be sixpence, and for the

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horse at grass, fower pence a night, and for oates, fower pence the halfe peck, and for hay the night, fower pence.

“It is allso ordered, that whosoever upon these tearmes shall unnecessarily stop or detayne his journey forth or back, or shall be necessarily stopped or detayned by authority or other just occasion, such person or persons shall beare the penalty or receive recompence extraordinarily as the authority who sent them shall judge right to be abated or augmented in his wages.”*

* Col. Rec. Connect. p. 242.

1673. MASSACHUSETTS.

Under date Jany. 6th, 1673. The General Court of Massachusetts reports as follows:

“The Court mett about the time.

“Whereas the publick occasions of the country doe frequently require that messengers be sent post, and as yet, no stated allowance settled in such cases, it is ordered by this Court and the authority thereof, that from henceforth every person so sent upon the publicke service of the country shall be allowed by the Treasurer after the rate of three pence a mile to the place to which he is sent, in money, as full satisfaction for the expence of horse and man; and no inholder shall take of any such messenger or others travayling upon publicke service more than two shillings pr bushell for oates, and fower pence for hay, day and night.† ”

† Rec. of Mass. Vol. iv. Pt. 2. p. 574.

In the year 1677, in answer to the request of several merchants of Boston, declaring that

“they have heard many complaints made by merchants and others that have binn sencible of the losse of letters, whereby merchants with their friends and employers in forreigne

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parts are greatly demnified (*sic*,) many times the letters are imputed and throwne upon the exchange, that who will may take them up; no person without some satisfaction being willing to trouble their houses therewith; therefore humbly desire, the court to depute some meete person to take in and convey letters according to yr direction,” *** “this court judgeth it meete to grant the petitioners request herein, and have made choyce of Mr. John Hayward the Scrivener to be the person for that service.‡ ”

‡ “ “ “ “ v. p. 147.

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In 1680 John Hayward or (Haywood) was appointed post-master of the whole colony, and in 1689 Richard Wilkins was appointed “to receive all letters, and to deliver out the same, and to receive on each one Penny.”*

* Willis, Hist. of Portland, p. 584.

1683. PENNSYLVANIA,

In July 1683, William Penn issued an order for the establishment of a Post Office, and granted to Henry Waldy of Tekonay, authority to hold one and “to supply passengers with horses from Philadelphia to New Castle or to the Falls.”

The rates of postage were, to wit

“Letters from the Falls to Philadelphia 3 d., to Chester 5 d., to New Castle 7 d., to Maryland 9 d. And from Philadelphia to Chester 2 d. to New Castle 4 d., and to Maryland 6 d.” This post went once a week, and was to be carefully published “on the meeting-house door, and other public places.”†

† Watson's Annals of Phila. vol. 2. p. 391.

In New Hampshire, a post-office was established by the Colony in 1693.

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In Maine, previous to the Revolution, the post came at the oftenest, but once a week to Portland from the West, but it was by no means regular. It was not until about 1760 that a weekly mail was established further east than Portsmouth; before that time it was not sent until a sufficient number of letters were collected to pay the expence.

The first attempt to systematize and regulate postal communication was in 1660 by Act of Parliament, previous to that date it had been in the hands of private parties.

In the year 1692 in the reign of William and Mary, in the Colony of Virginia, was passed the following Act.

“ An Act for encouraging the erecting of a Post-Office in this Country.

“ Whereas the erection and establishment of a post-office within this colony is conceived of generall concernement and of great advantage for the increase and preservation of trade and comerce therein for thereby speedy and safe dispatch may be had, and whereas their majesties by their letters Patent under the greate seale of England bearing date the 17th day of February in the 4th yeare of their reigne have given unto Thomas Neale esq. his executors, administrators and assigns full power and authority to erect, settle and establish within the chiefe portes of their severall islands, colonyes and plantations in America, an office or offices for the receiving and dispatching away of letters and x packetts, and to receive, send and deliver the same under such rates and sumes of money as the planters or inhabitants should agree to give or should be proportionable to the rates for the carriage of letters, ascertained in the act of Parliament for the erecting and establishing a post office, to hold and enjoy the same for the terme of one and twenty yeares under the yearely rent of six shillings and eight pence as by the said letters patents relation thereunto being had will more fully appeare.

“ Be it therefore enacted by the governor, councell and burgesses of this present General Assembly and the authority thereof, and it is hereby enacted,

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“That if the said Thomas Neale his substitutes, substitute or deputy shall by virtue of the said letters patent erect settle and establish in some convenient place within this colony and dominion, one generall post office from whence all letters and pacquets whatsoever may with expedition be sent unto any part of this colony and to every other place whatsoever and at which said office all returnes and answers may be received and shall alsoe in each county within this colony, settle and establish one or more post offices as is in this act hereinafter provided, then it shall and may be lawfull to and for the said Tho. Neale Esq., his substitutes and deputyes by him thereunto sufficiently authorized, to demand, have, receive and take for the postage and conveyancy for all such letters which he or they shall soe conveye, carry or send post, according to the severall rates and sumes of current money hereafter mentioned not to exceed the same, that is to say, for the post of every letter not exceeding one sheet to or from any place not exceeding fourscore English miles distance from the place where such letter shall be received three pence, and for the like post of every letter not exceeding two sheets six pence, and for the like post of every pacquet of letters proportionable unto the said rates, that is to say, for every sheet not exceeding two sheets to advance five pence and noe more, and for the like post of every pacquet of writs, deeds and other things after the rate of twelve pence for every ounce weight, and for the post of every letter not exceeding one sheet above the distance of fourscore English miles from the place where the same shall be received four pence half penny, and for the like post of a letter not exceeding two sheets nine pence, and proportionable to rates for the like post of all pacquets of letters, that is to say, for every sheet exceeding two sheets to advance four pence half penny and noe more, and for the like post of writs, deeds and other things after the rates of eighteen pence for every ounce weight; *provided allways* , that all merchants accounts and bills of exchange, invoyces and bills of loading are and shall be understood to be allowed at the rate and price of double letters, and shall be understood to be allowed to pass at the same rate and payment.* ”

* Hening's Stat. at Large, vol. III. p. 112.

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Legislature of the Province of New Hampshire.

(Session commenced March 1st 1693.)

“ An act for settling a post-office in this Province.

Whereas Thomas Neale, Esq., for himself his Executer, administrator and assignees has obtained from their most Excelent Majesty full power and authority by Letters Pattents xi under the great seal of England, bearing date the seventeenth day of February, 1691, to erect, settle and establish within their said Majesty's Colonies and Plantations in America, an Office or Offices for the receiving and dispatching of Letters and Pacquetts according to direction under such rates and sums of money as the Planters shall agree to give, and for as much as application has been made to the Lieutenant Governor and Councill for encouragement in this affair, Bee it therefore Enacted and ordained by the Lieut. Governor Councill and Representatives convened in general assembly. And it is hereby Enacted and ordained by the authority of the same, that a Post Office and Officer be henceforth appointed and settled in some convenient Place within the Town of Portsmouth for receiving and dispatching away, according to direction, all Letters and Pacquetts that shall be brought thereinto. And no person or persons whatever shall presume to carry or recarry any Letter or Letters for hire but only such as belong to the Post-Office, deriving their power and authority from the afore said Thomas Neale, except such Letters of Merchants and Masters which shall be sent by any master of any ship, boat or any other vessell of Merchandize or any other person employed by them for the cartage of such Letters aforesaid according to the respective directions, and alsoe precept Letters to be sent by any private friend or friends in their way of Journey or Travel or by any Messenger or Messengers sent on purpose for or concerning the private affairs of any person or persons.

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“And whoever offends against this act shall forfeit the sum of Ten pounds, one half to their Maj'ties towards the support of the Government of this Province, the other half to the Post Master General, who shall sue and prosecute for the same.

“And it is hereby further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid that all Letters and Pacquetts brought into this Post from beyond sea (other than such Letters as are before excepted) shall by the Importer be forthwith delivered to the Posthouse or to the Officer belonging thereunto, which Officer shall pay a half penny to the Importer for each letter or packet so delivered and for such Letters so brought in from beyond sea shall be pay'd by the person to whom directed Two Pence, and for a Paquette quantity no lesse than three Letters besides bills of Loading, Invoices, Gazetts, &c., four Pence, and for each Letter brought from Boston to this Province not exceeding sixpence and double for a Pacquette, and so proporconably on Letters on this side Boston, and for all other Letters from Beyond Boston shall be paid what is the accustomed allowance in the Govern't from whence they came.

“And it is hereby also further Enacted and ordained by the authority afores'd, that in case any Officer belonging to the Post Office shall omitt their duty in keeping constant Posts for the carrying of Letters to the several places and stages appointed or shall neglect seasonably and faithfully to deliver forth the Letters according to the intent of this act; such officer so offending shall forfeit the sum of Five pounds, ye one half to their Majesties, the other half to the party agressed, who shall sue for the same.

And all Letters concerning their Majesties service shall be received and dispatched away with all possible speed, according to their direction, free of all charge and without demanding pay for the same; any thing hereinbefore contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

“And it is further Enacted and ordained that the Officer of the Posthouse having Licence Granted to Retaile Bear, Cider and Ale within doors, according to Law, shall have his xii Excise free and no Officer of the Excise shall demand any thing of him for the same, and

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his person to be excused from watching and warding Provided always that this Act nor any thing therein contained shall continue in force any longer than three years from and after the publication thereof.”*

* Historical Magazine, vol. III. p. 351.

“ John Usher (Lieut. Governor.)

“ John Billman (Speaker.)

“ Thomas Davis, Sec'y.”

This attempt to establish a post-office system in the American Colonies was made in 1693 by Thomas Neale, to whom in various of the colonies a royal patent for this purpose had been issued, but his arrangements were very limited and imperfect. The utmost contemplated by Neale was a post-office in each county, and his actual operations came far short of this.†

† Hist. Mag. III. 150.

PENNSYLVANIA.

“ *Act of the Legislature of the Province of Pennsylvania, passed in 1693.*

“To and from Philadelphia by the eastern part of New England beyond Boston, nineteen pence.

“To and from Phila. to Lewis (Lewis or Lewiston Del.) Maryland, and Virginia, nine pence.

“To and from every place within eighty miles of Philadelphia, four pence, half penny.

“All letters belonging to the public, to be received and despatched free of all charges, and that the post, pass ferriage free of all ferries, within the town of New Castle and country

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depending, ("The three lower counties in Delaware," as they were called—now state of Delaware—are here referred to.)"

"Provided always that the said Andrew Hamilton shall within three month next ensuing prefix certain days of his setting forth and return, and shall continue constant posts to pass from Philadelphia to New York, and from Philadelphia to Newcastle."‡

‡ His Mag. III. 221.

Act of May 1697.

"Whereas, in the year 1693, a general post-office was by law erected at the request of Andrew Hamilton at Philadelphia, by which law a rate was put upon all letters; And whereas the charge of the said office hath much exceeded the postage, and being sensible of the benefit of the said office to trade and commerce, and to the Province and Territories in general if it be continued, and of great loss that will happen to both if it should happen to fail for want of encouragement. Be it therefore enacted &c." It was directed by the act that Hamilton should receive for three years the sum of "20 pounds silver money of this Province" annually, and that the law should continue in force three years.]

| " " " "

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"To the end that mutual correspondence may be maintained, and that letters may be speedily and safely despatched from place to place: Be it Enacted, by the authority aforesaid, That a general post office may be erected by Andrew Hamilton of Phil'a, from whence all letters and packets may be with all expedition sent to any of the parts of New England, and other adjacent colonies in these parts of America, at which said office all returns and answers may be received.

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“And be it further Enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that it shall be lawful for the said Andrew Hamilton, or some other as shall be appointed by the King, to be Postmaster General, in these parts, and his deputy or deputies in that office, to demand, receive and take, for the postage of all such letters, so by him conveyed, or sent post as aforesaid, according to the several rates hereafter mentioned, and not exceed the several rates hereafter expressed.

“All foreign letters from Europe, the West Indies or any parts beyond the seas, two pence each single letter, which is to be accounted such although it contain bills of lading, invoices, gazettes, &c.; and for each packet of letters four pence. And if packets or letters be at the office uncalled for, the space of forty-eight hours, the postmaster then sending them forth to the respective houses, or the persons to whom they are directed, one penny more for every such letter. “And for all foreign letters, outward bound, that shall be delivered into the post-office, two pence each letter or packet. “The post of inland letters to or from New York to Philadelphia, four pence half penny.

“To or from Philadelphia to Connecticut, 9 pence.

“To or from Philadelphia to Rhode Island, twelve pence.

“To and from Philadelphia to Boston, fifteen pence.”

Previous to these enactments a law was passed at Phila., in March, 1683, directing the mode in which letters on official business were to be dispatched. It was in the following terms: “Whereas the Governor may, on many occasions, be disappointed of obtaining true and speedy information of public affairs, as well from Europe as the neighboring colonies and remote parts of this Province and territories thereof, For prevention of all such inconveniences for the future, Be it Enacted, by the authority aforesaid, That every Justice of the Peace, Sheriff or Constable within the respective counties of this Province, and territories thereof, to whose hands or knowledge any Letter or Letters shall come,

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directed to or from the Governor, shall despatch them, within three hours, at the furthest, after the receipt or knowledge thereof, to the next Sheriff or Constable, and so forwards, as the Letter direct, upon the penalty of twenty shillings for every hour's delay.

“And in such cases, all Justices of the Peace, Sheriffs or Constables are hereby empowered to press either man or horse for that service, allowing for a horse or man, two pence by the mile, to be paid out of the public stock.”

Hamilton, on whom the right to carry the mail under the acts of 1693 and 1697 was conferred, applied on 23, 6th mo., 1701, by a petition through Patrick Robinson presented in his behalf, for the payment of the £60, which had been granted to him, when it was ordered “that the Treasurer pay the said sum as soon as he shall have sufficient in his hands for the same.” He is styled in the petition, “Col. Andrew Hamilton, *Post Master Gen'l in America*” and “Govr of the Jerseys.”*

* Provincial Minutes, II. Page 32.

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Governor Hamilton's death occurred in 1703 and James Logan, in a letter to William Penn, dated Amboy, 26th, 2d mo. (Sic Original) 1703, thus speaks of it: “The mournful occasion of my being here is the funeral of that worthy gentleman, our Lieut. Governor Hamilton, he lay sick of a putrid and hectic fever for about nine weeks, and (was) despatched 26 inst. in his perfect senses and was interred yesterday in the afternoon. We had advise of it but the evening before by the Post and presently in the news. William Trent (after whom Trenton N. J. was called,) Thomas Farmer and myself being all who on that short notice could get ready (our friends being mostly gone to Salem meeting) hastened away to pay this last respect, and came in time to meet the corpse at the Grave, so that now all thy late pains for an approbation in his favor are lost and our enemies unhappily gratified once more.”

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Colonel John Hamilton of New Jersey and son of Governor Andrew Hamilton, first devised the Post Office scheme for British America, for which he obtained a patent and the profits accruing. Afterwards he sold it to the crown, and a member of Parliament was appointed for the whole with a right to have his substitute reside in New York.*

* Watson's Annals of Phila. Vol, 2. p. 391.

Charles Read, in Philadelphia, writing to Jonathan Dickinson, in Jamaica, New Jersey, August 17, 1703, says, "The death of our Governor Hamilton has broken all our measures, I doubt we shall not be so happy in another, he being an affable, moderate man and, as far as I could observe free from that avaricious humor too predominant amongst us."

These extracts are from the valuable "Logan Manuscripts" in the possession of the American Philosophical Society. One of the measures referred to in this letter, was the plan to effect a union in legislation between the Province and Territories, and Proud thus refers to the circumstance; "For they had not accepted the new charter; and they had three years allowed them to signify their refusal. For this purpose Hamilton labored much with them and used many arguments to induce them to unite, but without success."

The office of postmaster-general for America had been created in 1692. The rates of postage were, for eighty miles or under 4½ pence. From New York to Philadelphia pence. To Virginia 12 pence. For a long time the expenses of the office exceeded the income. Until after 1704 there was no regular post further east than Boston, or further west than Philadelphia. In that year Lord Cornbury writing to the government at home says. "If I have any letter to send to either Virginia or Maryland, I must either send an express, who is often retarded for want of boats to cross those great rivers they must go over, or else for want of horses; or else I must send them by some passengers who are going thither. The least I have known any express to take hence to Virginia has been three weeks."

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Shortly after the date of this letter, stage-coaches were established between Boston and New York and Boston and Philadelphia; but no postoffice was established in Virginia until 1732; nor did any postal revenue accrue to Great Britain from the colonies until 1753.

In Philadelphia the old Coffee-House system prevailed for many years. In Virginia, the mail-bag was passed along from planter to planter; each being required by law (passed xv in 1757) to send a messenger with it to his next neighbor, under penalty as before mentioned of a hogshead of tobacco. Every man took out of the bag his own letters and sent on the remainder.

In 1692 as has been seen, the office of postmaster general for North America was created, but as late as 1704 no post-rider went further North than Boston, and no further South than Charleston. And even twenty years afterwards there was no post into the interior of the Country.

In 1710 a General Post Office was established in London for all the British Dominions under one director called a postmaster-general, who had letter-offices at Edinburg, Dublin, New York and other convenient places; the Deputy-postmaster general for the colonies was to reside in New York.

The following is that portion of the Act of 1710 and of that of 1. Geo. III, relating to the Colonies.

First Act of Parliament consolidating the Post Office in Great Britain and her Colonies, 9th Anne. 1710.

“And to the end that a general post office may be established for and throughout Her Majesty's Kingdom &c. and Colonies, in such manner as shall prove most beneficial to the People &c. be it enacted by Parliament that from and after the first day of June, 1711, there be one general P. O. for Great Britain, Ireland, N. Amer. West Indies &c. One Master appointed from time to time by the Queen, by Letters Patent—Name—Her Majesty's

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Post Master General, allowed to keep one Chief Letter Office in New York, and other chief offices in each of the Colonies of N. Amer. He has the power to appoint Deputies or substitutes and no other persons are permitted to prepare or provide Horses and Furniture to let to any other person than the above.

Postage as follows:

To or from N. Y, to any place within 60 Eng. miles—Single 4 pence.

Double 8 pence.

Treble one shilling.

Ounce one shilling, 4 pence.

“ “ “ not exceeding 100 Eng. miles, 6 pen. 1 sh., 1 sh. & 6 pen., 2 sh.

From Perth Amboy (Jersey) to any place not exceeding 60 Eng. miles 4 p., 8 p., 1 s., 1 sh. & 4 p

“ “ “ “ “ “ 100 Eng. miles 6 p., 1 sh., 1 sh. & 6 p., 2 sh.

“ N. Y. to New Lond. (Connt) & Philad'a 9 p., 1 sh. & 6 p., 2 sh. & 3 p., 3 sh.

“ Phil'a to place not exceeding 60 Eng. miles 4 p., 8 p., 1 sh., 1 sh. & 4 p.

“ “ “ “ 100 “ “ 6 p., 1 sh., 1 sh. & 6 p., 2 sh.

“ N. Y. to any place in R. I., Mass., N. Hamp., Maryland 1 sh., 2 sh., 3 sh., 4 sh.

“ above to any place not exceeding 60 miles, 4 p., 8 p., 1 sh., 1 sh. & 4 p.

“ “ “ “ 100 “ 6 p., 1 sh., 1 sh. 6 p., 2 sh.

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“ N. Y. to Salem (Mass.) and to Virginia—1 sh. 3 p., 2 sh. & 6 p., 3 sh. & 9 p., 5 sh.

“ above to any place not exceeding 60 miles, 4 p., 8 p., 1 sh., 1 sh. & 4 p.

“ “ “ “ 100 “ 6 p., 1 sh., 1 sh. & 6 p., 2 sh.

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From N. Y. to Charles Town (South Carol.)—1 sh. & 6 p., 3 sh., 4 sh. & 6 p., 6 sh.

“ above, not exceeding 60 miles, 4 p. 8 p., 1 sh., 1 sh. & 4 p.

“ “ “ 100 “ 6 p., 1 sh., 1 sh. & 6 p., 2 sh.

All Deputys or Agents, when riding Post, are to be allowed to cross and recross all Ferries without any charge being made. All Ferryman to pass all agents of the P. O. within a half-hour after demand is made, or forfeit £5.*

* Stat. at Large. 9. Anne. 1710.

“ *An Act to alter certain Rates of Postage,*” &c., established in the Reign of Queen Anne

This act goes into effect Oct. 10th 1765 and is in substance (for the colonies) as follows:

Letters from or to London from any port in Brit. Am. 1 sh., 2 sh., 3 sh., 4 sh.

From any Port, by sea, to any other port, in Brit. Am. 4 pence, 8 pence, 1 sh., 1 sh. 4 p.

For inland conveyance—60 Brit. miles—4 p., 8 p., 1 sh., 1 sh. 4 p.

“ “ “ 100 “ “ 6 p., 1 sh., 1 sh. 6 p., 2 sh.

“ “ “ 200 “ “ 8 p., 1 sh. 4 p., 2 sh., 2 sh. 8 p.

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“ “ “ more than 200 Brit. miles, for every 100 miles 2 p., 4 p., 6 p. 8 p.

All letters brought by passengers of vessels, or others, are to be delivered to the P. O. for distribution by the Deputies; under a penalty of £5.

No vessel is allowed to break bulk, until all letters are delivered to the proper authorities.

Certain persons are to be appointed to survey and measure distances on the Post Roads; to be recorded in books, copies of which are to be left deposited in all the chief P. Offices in the Colonies.†

† Eng. Rev. Stat. vol. 7. p. 503. I. Geo. III.

1717.

In Dec. 1716 Jonathan Dickinson writes to his correspondent, saying, “We have a settled post from Virginia to Maryland unto us, and goes through all our Northern Colonies, whereby advices from Boston to Williamsburg in Virginia is completed in four weeks, from March to December, and in double that time in the other months of the year.”‡

‡ Watson's Annals of Phila. vol. 2 p. 391.

A. Spotswood to Govr. on Post Office, 1730.

Germanna July ye 31 st 1730.

Sir: —

I am now sending the bearer, Mr. William Russell, to transact and prepare Matters, for settling a regular Post Correspondence, which may reach so far Southward as through the Colony of Virginia, I take occasion to Notify to your Honour my being charged with the xvii Care and Conduct of His Majesty's Post within your Government, as well as through all ye

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Provinces on ye Continent of North America and Islands in ye West Indies; and as I cannot doubt of your good disposition to Countenance an undertaking which is entirely calculated to benefit Trade, and promote His Majesty's Revenue, I rest assured that the Post Officers will under your Administration meet with all needful Protection, which must engage me to lay hold on every occasion to testify that I am

Sir, Your Honour's Most Obedient Humble Servant, A. Spotswood.

The Hon'ble Goven'r Gordon. *

* Penn Archives, vol. I. pp. 264, 5.

The foregoing laws, documents and citations will have shown the condition of Postal communication in this country to the year 1710.

For forty years after the passage of the Act of Queen Anne there was very little perceptible improvement. The post-roads were generally in bad condition, the riders, although then perfectly loyal, were not trustworthy, and the postmasters probably not much better. The following experience is illustrative of this point. When Benjamin Franklin printed the "Pennsylvania Gazette" in 1730, Andrew Bradford printed the "Mercury;" the two were naturally opposed to each other, and in particular in their efforts to obtain the advertising patronage of the vicinity; now Bradford being Postmaster, used his influence to exclude the "Gazette" from the mails, and with some success, the public supposing from not seeing Franklin's paper so frequently as the "Mercury" that the latter was the best advertising medium, and acting accordingly. Franklin did, however, both send and receive papers by the post, but he did it by bribing the riders. Bradford's conduct in forbidding the riders to carry the "Gazette," excited the disgust of Franklin. "I thought so meanly of the practice," he says, "that when I afterwards came into his situation I took care never to imitate it.†

† Parton's Life of Franklin, vol. I. p. 196.

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The Post-mastership and newspaper-printing were commonly united in our early history.

Thus in 1719, one John Campbell, postmaster of Boston, who published the "News Letter," was turned out of his position as postmaster; but, feeling aggrieved at his removal, he would not dispose of his paper, and his successor in office, William Bocker, started a paper of his own, called the "Boston Gazette," being advised so to do by the merchants of Boston, who stated that they had "been *prevented* from having their newspaper sent them by the Post ever since Mr. Campbell was removed from being postmaster.

But Bocker had been appointed by the Colonial postmaster, and when he had been but a few months in office, news came out from England that the postmaster-general had appointed to the position one Philip Masgrave. As the central office was of course the authority, Masgrave took the office, and bought from Bocker his newspaper. Now Bocker's paper had been printed by James Franklin, by whom Benjamin Franklin was employed; but Masgrave choosing to employ another printer, Mr. Franklin's resentment was kindled, and in spite of the advice of his friends, he started a third newspaper called the "New England Courant," for which Benjamin set type, wrote poetical contributions and acted as xviii carrier. Thus the appointment of a new postmaster was the cause of starting two newspapers in the city of Boston, while it brought about Benjamin Franklin's first conflict with postmasters.

No man in America was so identified with the earliest and latest interests of the Colonial Post Office as Benjamin Franklin.

In 1737, when he held the position of Clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly, he received the appointment of Postmaster of Philadelphia; and as he was then publishing his "Gazette" he possessed opportunities for obtaining news and distributing his paper, which gave him advantage over all other printers and editors.

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In 1727 the Mail to Annapolis is opened, this year to go once a fortnight in summer and once a month in winter, via New Castle &c., to the Western shore and back to the Eastern shore; managed by William Bradford in Philadelphia, and by William Parks in Annapolis.*

* Watson's Annals of Phila. vol. II. p. 391.

"In 1738 Henry Pratt is made riding-postmaster for all the stages between Phila. and Newport in Virginia; to set out in the beginning of each month and to return in twenty-four days. To him all merchants &c. may confide their letters and other business, he having given security to the postmaster general.

"In 1745 John Dalley surveyor states that he has just made a survey of the road from Trenton to Amboy, and has set up marks at every two miles to guide the traveller. It was done by private subscriptions, and he proposes to do the whole road from Phila. to New York in the same way if a sum can be made up."

"In 1748 when Professor Kalm arrived at Phila. from London, many of the inhabitants came on board his vessel for letters. Such as were not called for were taken to the coffee-house, where everybody could make inquiry for them." Thus showing that the post-office did not yet claim a right to their distribution.

Such was the condition of things, when in 1753, by appointment of the Post Master General, Benjamin Franklin and Wm Hunter were commissioned to succeed the Deputy postmaster general for the Colonies, just deceased.

They were allowed £300 a year each, provided they could make the office yield that amount of profit.

During that Summer (1753) Franklin with his accustomed energy, proceeded to systematize and arrange the department, and to that end set out on a tour of inspection, and visited every post-office in the country except that of Charleston, S. C.

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In 1753, the delivery of letters by the penny post was first begun. At the same time began the practice of advertising remaining letters in the office. The letters for all the xix neighboring counties went to Philadelphia, and lay there till called for—thus, letters for Newtown, Bristol, Chester, New Castle, &c., are to be called for in Philadelphia.*

* Watson's Annals vol. II. p. 391 et seq.

In 1754 Franklin gave notice that the mail to New England which used to start but once a fortnight in winter, should start once a week all the year, whereby answers might be obtained to letters between Phil'a and Boston, in three weeks, which used to require six weeks!"

After four years of Franklin's rule the Post Office yielded the salary of the postmasters, and a small revenue besides, and in 1774 a clear annual revenue of £3000 to Great Britain.

As an illustration of the way in which post-offices were attended in those days we may refer to Franklin, who writes in 1757, "Mr Colden (postmaster at New York) could not spare his daughter, as she helps him in the post-office, he having no clerk."

The first year's experiment brought Franklin in debt £900, yet he refers with great satisfaction to his success in expediting the mails.

"In 1758, newspapers which aforetime were carried post free per mail, will, by the reason of their great increase, be changed thereafter to the small price of 9d. per year, for fifty miles, and 1s. 6d. for one hundred miles. This was, most probably, the private emolument of the rider; the papers themselves probably not having been mailed at all."

The following letter throws some light on one of Franklin's efforts to make the Post Office a convenience: Washington was at the time Commander in Chief of the Virginia forces, raised to protect the frontiers from the Indians and French. His headquarters were at Winchester. Franklin in his capacity of Deputy Postmaster, or rather the postmaster-

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general for the Colonies had the year previous, during Braddock's march, arranged a post between Philadelphia and Winchester, in consequence of a vote of the Pennsylvania Assembly.

To George Washington.

Conveyance of the Mail for the Accomodation of the Army.

Philadelphia, 19 August 1756.

Sir. I have your favors of July 23d and August 3d, but that you mention to have wrote by Mr. Balfour is not come to hand. I forwarded the packet enclosed in that of July 23d as directed, and shall readily take charge of any other letters from you, that pass through my hands.

The post, between this place and Winchester, was established for the accommodation of the army chiefly, by a vote of our Assembly.

They are not willing to continue the charge, and it must, I believe, be dropped, unless your Assembly and that of Maryland will continue to support, it, which, perhaps is scarce to be expected.

I am sorry it should be laid down, as I shall myself be a loser in the affair of Newspapers. (At this time Franklin printed and published a Newspaper in Philadelphia.) But the letters per post by no means defray the expense. If you can prevail with your Assembly xx to pay the rider from Winchester to Carlisle. I will endeavour to persuade ours to continue to pay the rider from Carlisle hither. My agreement with the house was, to carry all public dispatches gratis, to keep account of postage received for private letters, and charge the expense of riders and officers; and they were to pay the balance. I am, Sir, with great esteem and respect, &c.,

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B. Franklin. ”*

* Spark's Life and Writings of Franklin, vol. VII. pp. 121, 122.

1756.

In 1756 “British Pacquet Boats are first announced between New York and Falmouth, the postage of each single letter to be four pennyweights of silver. In 1765 a second line of stages is set up for New York, to start twice a week, using three days in going through, at 2 pence a mile. It was a covered Jersey, without springs, and had four owners concerned.”†

† “ “ “ “ “

The following letter shows the interest that was beginning to be aroused in the home government, in postal communication; international and intercolonial.

Dunn Halifax To Gov. Penn.

St. James, August 11th 1764.

Sir:

It being of great importance and advantage to His Majesty's Service, and to the Commercial interest and General Convenience of His Majesty's Subjects in North America, that the Conveyance of Letters, by the Post, should be facilitated and extended throughout the Colonies upon that extensive Continent, His Majesty's Post Master General is concerting measures for those purposes, and as it cannot be doubted but the Legislatures of the several Colonies will readily and cheerfully contribute to the success of a Plan, from which they may expect to derive the Benefit of a regular, safe and speedy Correspondence, I am commanded to signify to you His Majesty's Pleasure, that you should recommend it to the Assembly of the Colony under your Government to provide for

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the Establishment of Ferries and erecting proper Buildings on the water side, wherever the same may be found necessary, that the Posts may meet with no Delays or Interruptions in passing.

His Majesty's Post Master General having also represented that a Map of the Province under your Government, with the present course of the Posts throughout the same clearly marked out, would be of great use to him in the present undertaking, I am to desire that you will procure and transmit such a Map, together with a State of such alterations as you apprehend to be wanting for the better Regulation and Improvement of the said Posts; and you will give your constant Aid and Support to the Post Masters within your Government, in the Execution of their office, which is so immediately calculated for the publick Benefit.

I am with great Truth and Regard, Sir, your most obedient Humble Servant, Dunn Halifax.

Directed: — Penn, Esqr., Lieut. Govenor of Pensilvania.‡

‡ Penn'a Archives vol. IV. p. 202.

xxi

On the 8th of November 1764 Franklin sailed for England, his third voyage; remaining abroad until 1775. His prolonged absence from his post, was made the excuse for an effort on the part of his enemies to compass his discharge from his official position, even as early as 1768, the real reason being as he believed, his “being too much of an American.” It was then the practice to allow the non-residence of American officers, provided care was taken that their business was done by Deputy or otherwise.

This affair blew over, but in 1774 Franklin having made himself numerous enemies by the circulation of the “Hutchinson Correspondence,” was cited before the Committee of the Privy Council, and examined in reference to the Petition of the Assembly of Massachusetts for the removal of Governor Hutchinson, and also in relation to the letters, whose publicity had been the immediate cause of this action. During two separate sessions of the

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Committee, Franklin was baited and badgered by their Counsel, until the decision was finally rendered against granting the Petition.

On the following day, January 31st 1774, Franklin received his dismissal from the office of Deputy Postmaster General in America.

Franklin remained in England until after the meeting of the Continental Congress, and arrived in Philadelphia May 5th 1775.

The feeling in his favor and against his persecutors was unbounded. It was said truly that the dismissal of Dr. Franklin from his position was equivalent to a seizure of the American Post-Office; that only creatures of the Ministry were to be appointed Post Masters; and that it was no longer safe to trust the letters of patriotic Americans to the Mails. So generally were private arrangements made for carrying letters, that the American Post Office never again contributed a farthing to the British Treasury.*

* Sparks' Life and Writings of Franklin vol. VII. p. 405, Parton's Life of Franklin vol. I, pp. 594 et. seq.

The following quotations will exhibit what was doing in postal matters at the period we have just been considering.

1775. RHODE ISLAND.

It is voted and resolved, that this General Assembly will join with the other colonies in establishing post offices and post riders, in order to preserve an intercourse between the different colonies, which will prove so beneficial to the public, as well as to individuals; and that this colony will, for the present, defray the expense of post riders throughout this colony, upon the usual post road.

It is further voted and resolved, that post offices be, and hereby are, established at the following places, to wit: at Newport, Providence, Bristol, Warren, Tower Hill, in South

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Kingstown and Westerly; and that the following persons be, and hereby are, appointed post masters, to wit:

For Newport, Mr. Nathaniel Otis; Providence, Mr. John Carter; Bristol, Mr. Jonathan Russell; Warren, Mr. Shubart Burr; Tower Hill, Mr Ray Sands; Westerly, Mr. Joshua Babcock.

It is further voted and resolved, that the rates and duties for postage of letters, be as follows, to wit:

xxii

Rates of Postage in the Colony of Rhode Island.

£ sh. d.

For any distance not exceeding sixty miles 0 0 5 1—4.

“ sixty miles and not exceeding one hundred miles 0 0 8.

“ one hundred miles, and not exceeding two hundred miles 0 0 10 1—4.

“ two “ “ “ “ three “ “ 0 1 1.

“ three “ “ “ “ four “ “ 0 1 4.

“ four “ “ “ “ five “ “ 0 1 6 1—4.

“ five “ “ “ “ six “ “ 0 1 9.

“ six “ “ “ “ seven “ “ 0 2 0.

“ seven “ “ “ “ eight “ “ 0 2 2 1—2

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“ eight “ “ “ “ nine “ “ 0 2 5.

“ nine “ “ “ “ one thousand “ 0 2 8.

The above rates to be paid in lawful money, of this colony, and are for the postage of a single letter. They are to be doubled for all double letters, trebled for all treble letters; and for every ounce weight, four times so much is to be charged as for a single letter.

It is further voted and resolved, that Mr Peter Mumford be, and he is hereby, appointed the post rider from Newport to Providence; and Mr Benjamin Mumford the post rider from Newport to New London; and that they neither receive nor deliver any letters from any post office heretofore established in this colony.

It is further voted and resolved, that Messrs. Joshua Babcock, John Jenckes, William Bradford, and Joseph Anthony, be, and they are hereby, appointed a committee, to agree with the post masters and post riders, for their service; and to give directions for the setting off and returns of the post riders; and that the post masters account to the said committee for what they shall receive.

It is further voted and resolved, that all letters which the post rider for the time being, may receive, directed for the town of Boston shall be first post paid and submitted to the examination of the Commander in Chief of the American forces at Cambridge or of a committee that may be appointed by the Provincial Congress of the Massachusetts Bay, before they are permitted to go to Boston and that all letters coming out of Boston be submitted to the like examination.

And it is further voted and resolved that this act shall continue in force until this Assembly shall make some further under relative to the same.*

* R. I. Colonial Records, vol. VII. pp. 351, 52.

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Post Riding in 1775.

The following notices are from the "New England Chronicle and Essex Gazette" for May 25, 1775: "Silent Wilde News Carrier to Northampton, Deerfield &c., notifies his customers that the first six months of his present year's service ends with the Eighth Day of May instant. He desires them to remember that on the account there will be due to him from each One Dollar and One Quarter or Seven Shillings and Six Pence, and he very earnestly prays that every one would remember the day and be punctual, that so he may be able to continue the same. Said Wilde also takes the present opportunity to entreat those who are in arrears for last year kindly to consider that it would be a great favour if each xxiii individual would pay him immediately their respective balances, for hereby he would be furnished with \$150, a considerable part of which is due to the printers, who have cause of uneaseiness that they have not before now received what is severally due to them. Said Wilde now determines to ride through Boston, Lancaster, &c., as usual, beginning next week."

"Nathan Bushnell, Jr. (Constitutional Post) proposes to carry letters, &c., to the camp at Roxbury and Cambridge, and as often as practicable to Boston, leaving the printing office in New London at 7 o'clock, Thursday evening, Norwich at 9 o'clock Friday mornings; and to leave the camps at 9 o'clock Monday mornings, return the same road, and arrive at New London on Wednesday evenings.* "

* Hist. Mag. vol. IV. p. 17.

This closes my collection of citations having reference to the history of the Colonial Post Office. The same year (1775), the Congress of the Confederation, having assumed the practical direction of affairs, appointed a committee to devise a system of Post Office Communication, which committee made a report on the 26th of July, recommending a plan, which, on the same day was adopted, and Dr. Franklin unanimously appointed Postmaster General, at a salary of \$1,000 per annum.

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A few words in relation to Hugh Finlay. It will be remembered that in 1768, the effort was made to displace Franklin from the Colonial Postmaster Generalship; in December, 1772, Franklin procured and sent to Massachusetts the Hutchinson Correspondence, which action on his part was the cause of his ultimate removal. In the same month, December, 1772, Hugh Finlay was appointed Surveyor of Post Offices and Post Roads on the Continent of North America, but did not sail from England until the following March.

On the 31st of January, 1774, Franklin was dismissed from his office, and on the 25th of February succeeding, his place was filled as follows:

“February 25th, 1774, [appointments].

Hugh Finlay, Esq., Deputy Postmaster General in North America, in the room of Dr. Franklin removed.”†

† Annual Register, vol. XVII., 1774, p. 84.

In a letter written in London, “4 February 1772” to Mr. John Foxcroft, Resident Deputy Postmaster General in America, Dr. Franklin refers to the fact of his having “become a little obnoxious to the Ministry”‡

‡ Sparks' Franklin, vol. VIII., p. 2.

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This Foxcroft, whom Franklin addresses as “Dear Friend,” is constantly referred to in “Finlay's Journal,” as in authority over him, and the one from whom he received his directions. He is mentioned in “*Sabine's American Loyalists*,”* as follows: “Foxcroft, John. One of the two postmasters general of the crown in the thirteen colonies; and was nominally in office in the year 1782, and probably until the close of the contest. After Galloway retired to England he became a correspondent.”

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* Page 294.

Finlay is also mentioned in the same work, (*Sabine*.)† “ Findley, Hugh. He and John Foxcroft were the two Postmasters-general of the thirteen colonies, and were continued at the head of that department until 1782, certainly, and probably until the peace.”

† Page 285.

It would have seemed natural and proper in sending Mr. Finlay on so important a mission as the survey of the whole postal communication of the Colonies, that some conference should have been held with Dr. Franklin on the subject. Holding the highest office in the department, and thoroughly acquainted with the whole subject, and present in England, I can yet find no reference to his having any knowledge of this survey whatsoever.

Neither does Hugh Finlay in his “ Journal ” mention him by name anywhere, or so much as allude to any other authority than Mr. Foxcroft.

Unable to reconcile this conflict of fact with probability, I am forced to the conclusion that the sending of Finlay to America was the preliminary step in the determined and afterwards successful effort to deprive Franklin of his position, which the emissary afterwards received as the reward for his services.

Whether the forwarding of the Hutchinson Correspondence to Massachusetts by Franklin was known to the British Ministry in December, it is impossible for me to learn, but certainly ample time had elapsed prior to the actual departure of Finlay in March, for that fact to have come to their knowledge.

The remarks of Finlay throughout his “ Journal, ” his frequent reference to the ill-feeling existing towards Great Britain, his criticism of the conduct of post-office business, of the fidelity of postmasters and loyalty of riders, are all so many reflections upon Franklin; the most prominent being the utter ignoring of his name and relation to the department.

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Finlay's Journal ends abruptly on the 24th of May, 1774, instead of on the 26th of June, as its title-page states; this being the last page of the book in which it is written xxv it is likely that being copied from note-books, the balance for some reason remained uncopied, as there could not have been sufficient in the short space of thirty-three days to have filled another volume; just about this period Finlay must have received his appointment.

It has seemed to me that Finlay's Journal might do something towards elucidating the secret history of Franklin's dismissal from office.

The apparent connection between the circulation of the Hutchinson Correspondence; the special survey of the Colonial Post-Office Department; the deposition of Franklin, and the installation in his place of the man appointed to make the examination, appear to me to mean something more than a mere coincidence.

I have made these deductions with the desire that some one better able than I, should investigate the subject, and if there be any truth in the supposition substantiate it, or if not, expose its incorrectness. If by these few notes and selections I shall have added anything to the interest of this curious Journal, I shall feel sufficiently gratified, even if I have not increased our knowledge of American history.

Frank H. Norton, *Mercantile Library, Brooklyn*.

April, 1867.

JOURNAL.

JOURNAL.

In December 1772, the Right Honorable Francis Baron Le Despencer, and the Right Honorable Henry Fredrick Thynne, His Majesty's Post Master General, appointed me to be, Surveyor of Post roads on the Continent of North America; in the month of March

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following, I was commanded to embark for New York, to be instructed in my duty as Surveyor by the resident Deputy General there.

I arrived at New York in April; Mr Foxcroft was then in Virginia: without waiting his return I proceeded to Canada in consequence of leave obtained in England, and arrived at Quebec on the last of the month.

During my stay there I received orders from Mr Foxcroft to hold myself in readiness to enter on service in September by beginning the Survey in exploring the uninhabited country between the most Southerly settlements on the River Chaudiere in Canada, and the most Northerly habitations on the River of Kennebek in the Government of Massachusetts Bay.

These two Rivers are supposed to take their rise on the height of land between those two Provinces, the first emptys itself into the River St. Lawrence six miles above Quebec and the other falls into the Atlantic ocean a little to the Eastward of Casco Bay.

I had formerly represented to Mr Foxcroft, that the Post route by Lake Champlain was tedious and subject to retardments; in summer 2 from contrary winds, and every fall and spring, when it begins to freeze, and at the breaking up of the ice, it is absolutely impassable; it is never good above a month in winter.

That, The mercantile body had often made complaint of the inconveniencys arising from the unavoidable detentions of the New York mails.

That, It had been pointed out that shorter routes unobstructed by Lakes or large Rivers, might be opened; the way by the Chaudiere and Kennebek Rivers down to Falmouth in Casco Bay was represented as short and easy.

These representations were attended to by Mr Foxcroft, and in consequence, he sent me orders to examine the proposed route.

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I communicated the order received, to the Lieut. Governor, Hector Theophilus Cramahe Esqr. who generously promised every aid and all the assistance in his power, to carry this desir'd project into execution: and as money was necessary to defray the expence of the intended Survey, he put his name to a subscription paper presented to him, and contributed liberally; his good example was follow'd by the Gentlemen of the Council, and in a spirited manner by the Gentlemen of the City—in twenty four hours, more than a sufficiency was raised.

Four Indians perfectly well acquainted with all the different passes, were deemed a number sufficient to conduct me and carry the necessary provisions: four of the most expert were accordingly engaged, with an interpreter of the *Abenaki* language to meet me on the 15th Sep. at the last settlement on the banks of the Chaudiere, and from thence to conduct me by the shortest way, to the nearest settlements on the river Kennebek in New England.

They declar'd themselves able to do this, as these countrys were perfectly 3 well known to them, having been bred in those woods, which they had yearly traversed from their infancy.

They proposed to mark (as they shou'd pass along, in their rough way) the path by which a good road might be cut.—Now from their sketches and remarks, and my own observations, the nature of the country will be known, and the practicability of opening a communication to our Kennebek neighbours shown.

On the 13th of September I cross'd the river St. Lawrence, and proceeded to the last farm on the river Chaudiere, 52 miles S. Easterly of Quebec, and there met my Indians according to appointment the 15th; the road is passable in carriages: the greatest part of it is good, and the inhabitants are dayly making it better.

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The country all along is very pleasant excepting about twelve miles from the river Echemin (*etroit chemin*) to the Chaudiere, the country is poor and marshy, without settlements. The river here is a hundred yards wide, a smooth clear gentle stream with a pebly bottom. The reaches in this river are long between rapid and rapid, but navigable for batteaus only; when the snow melts on the mountains in Spring, the little runs in the high lands are swell'd to torrents, which are empty'd into the Chaudiere: it overflows its banks from this supply, and the present road is at that season overflowed. A little way back from the river the lands rise into fine little hills profusely clad with beautiful trees. This part of the country settles fast.

Capt. Neilson and Lieut. Harrison being desirous to accompany me on the expedition, hired two Indians to assist their servant.

On the 15th our little party, eleven in number, embarked in three birch canoes, with twenty days allowance of pork, flower and bisket, depending 4 on our fusils and fish hooks for delicacys. We took our departure from the last house on the Chaudiere and proceeded three miles to the Rapide du Diable, a strong current so named by the Canadians.

The Indians, one at the head and the other at the stern of these crank skifs, stood upright and set them up the stream with poles. Our canoes drew about five inches water, in some places of this rapid there was not more than eight; in spite of all possible care the bottoms of our canoes rub'd against large stones that lay here and there under water, and these tender barks are render'd leaky by the slightest touch when under way: we were forced to go on shore and unload them, make a fire to dry them, then we pitched the rub'd parts; this took up about half an hour; the Indians are very expert in their own matters. We launched our canoes again into the water, and continued setting against a strong current 7 miles to the river called La Famine; at the mouth of this river we found two huts inhabited by two familys employ'd in clearing lands: the soil is rich here, and the wheat it produces is plump

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and heavy: these Canadians regal'd us with green ears of Indian corn roasted, and bak'd pompions and milk; we passed the night on straw spread on the ground.

The turnings and windings of the river were various, from S. E. to S. by W. This is the last settlement in Canada this way.

16th.—Embarked early, setting up the Chaudiere four miles to the River des Loups, course S. E. by S.: the river takes a turn here to the S. S. W. We leave it to the right, and follow the River des Loups, by the banks of which is the best way to carry a road, being in a direction free from lakes, marshes or mountains; all these obstructions are to be met with in carrying a road by the Chaudiere.

5

By the Indian sketch of the country, the Chaudiere route appear'd the shortest, but much intercepted by ponds, swamps, marshes and mountains, and the report of the guides confirm'd it.

It is impossible to guess distances from an Indian draft; that people have no idea of proportion.

The River des Loups is about 40 yards wide at its mouth, is exceeding shallow, rocky and rapid; indeed at this season we found it so low, that our canoes cou'd not float in many places, and here our fatigue began. We were obliged to wade, the Indians bearing the canoes up as much as possible on the surface, thus carrying them slowly along; by continuing long in the water, our feet became so beat and tender, that we endur'd much pain in treading on the rocks and stones in the river; besides they were so slippery that we often fell down. In this disagreeable manner we proceeded six miles, and at 5 o'clock in the evening encamped at the foot of a fall where the river tumbles over a bed of rocks ten foot high. The banks of the river are pretty steep, the courses winding in short reaches from S. E. to S. by W.

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We unloaded our canoes, lifted them out of the water, and carried them and our provisions, &c., above the fall, made a slow fire, and set the canoes to dry at a distance from it; then we made a *Wigwam* or hut, of branches, open in front; we next made a large fire at a convenient distance; the floor of our Wigwam we laid with tender sprigs of the aromatick Spruce tree, which comforts the lungs, and defends the breast from noxious night vapours; this makes a soft and agreeable bed. After all these matters were arranged, we hung our kettle to the fire, and boil'd pork in sufficient quantity for supper, and to last us all next day untill the evening, when the same work is again done. After supper each man wraps himself in his 6 blanket, lays himself down on his spruce bed with his feet to the fire, and passes the night in sound and refreshing sleep. We rise with the sun, pitch our canoes, load them, and leave the encampment. We found trout, ducks and partridge everywhere.

Every night after supper, *Mentowermet*, our chief guide, drew a sketch of the next days route on a sheet of smooth birch bark with charcoal, marking the rivulets, ponds, lakes, marshes, ascents and descents, and dotted the pass most proper for a road. These sketches I took off on paper, correcting them and laying down the distances as I went along, to guide me in protracting the great sketch. He was right in every thing but distances; when any difficulty occur'd, he called a council of the other five and they rectify'd matters among them.

- All the distances here mentioned are computed.

17th.—Proceeded a mile to another fall like the first. We carried our canoes about thirty yards; we waded draging and supporting them this day as yesterday, and made 11 miles on our way; the river winds often in very short turns, deviating in these small windings to the right and left from S. E. Our canoes were much damaged by rubbing against the rocks; they leak'd much to day. The banks of the river are high, and the lands look well; they are never overflow'd.

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18th.—Showery warm weather, still wading and dragging our canoes—the river narrows and becomes shallower; it was with much difficulty that we got along; they took in a great deal of water; we were obliged to make frequent halts to stop our leaks, yet in spite of all our care our flower got wet. We made 5 miles this day; we encamp'd at the mouth of a large 7 brook which here emptys itself into the River des Loups that here turns off to the S. W.—the brook comes from the E. a little southerly. The turns in the river this last 5 miles were very short from E. to S. E. We encamped early on purpose to pack up our provisions, &c., in proper packages to be distributed in proportional burthens to each of the party as we were next day to proceed thro' the woods.

19th.—Three Indians carried each man a canoe—three were loaded with pork, flower, kettles and hatchets; the rest of the party carried fusils, powder and shot, paddles, blankets and all our remaining baggage; thus we set forward in Indian file keeping a S. by E. direction, we immediately lose the brook, it is on our left. The way is much obstructed by fallen trees, large stones and there's some miry places in it; We continued on a gentle ascent 5 miles and cross'd the brook which was to our left, we now kept it to the right at a distance still rising gently, except in two or three places where it is a little steep; after a walk of three miles from the place where we cross'd the brook, we descend gently half a mile to a lake from whence the brook issues; we took nine hours to walk 9 miles. The branches of the trees tore and bruised our canoes, the boughs caught our packs, and so entangled us that at times we cou'd not disengage ourselves for minutes, we scrambled over, and sometimes crept under fallen trees; tangled shrubs catch'd our feet and threw us down under our burthens: we had a most fatiguing march. After refreshing ourselves and mending our canoes, we embarked on still transparent water cover'd with bullrushes, this led us into a round small lake which narrows and brought us into another round bason rather larger, the course over both S. a mile, then passing a very narrow strait, it suddenly widens into a piece of water three 8 miles long and two and a half broad, with a few small islands in it. The lands a little way from the water rise gradually to a great highth all around, excepting to the S. E. The woods are poor, made up of bad pine, spruce and

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birch. We proceeded the whole length of the lake S. E. by S. it narrows all of a sudden at the end, and is filled with rocky little islands for a quarter of a mile; we landed at the left hand corner of the end of this strait, took up our burthens as before and march'd thro' the woods ascending a little more than a quarter of a mile and walk'd a $\frac{1}{4}$ a-mile farther on a descent to a lake, the course S. E.

- Half way over this carrying place is the just height of land between Canada and New England, consequently the boundary line between the Province of Quebec, and Massachusetts Bay will be a line drawn half way between the lake we just left, and this lake; the line wou'd run in a N. E. direction, the waters of the lake behind us fall at last into the River St Lawrence, and the waters of this lake join the river of Penobscot which falls into the Atlantic Ocean.

On this highth the roads shou'd join. We are here 98 miles distant from Quebec, and 46 from the last house on the river Chaudiere. We encamped on the bank of this lake which is in New England.

20th.—Embarked on the lake and steered E. S. E. half a mile to an island, and there the lake takes a turn to the S. W.; then we open a remarkable high mountain bearing S.—we steer S. W. 2 miles to the end of the lake where it contracts and falls over a bed of rocks in a torrent of 20 yards broad, we left it to the right, and walked half a mile S. E. by S. to a little lake $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile over which we cross'd S. E. by S.; then we took up our canoes and packs and walk'd S. by E. about 5 miles over bare 9 roots of trees, so interlaced and twisted that they resemble the skin of a corded melon. From the last lake there issues a rivulet which we keep to the right for three miles, then we cross it, and it runs to the left of us but out of sight, until it falls into the river Penobscot where we join it.

Penobscot where we enter it is about thirty yds broad, and it encreases until it emptys itself at the mouth of the Bay of Fundy.

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We put our canoes into it, paddling with the stream; it serpentine very much, the longest reaches run S. S. E. I computed that we made sixteen miles over the surface of the water tho' not more than 8 in our course. This river is full of salmon and trout, its banks are marked all over with the marks of the hoofs of moose-deer and the feet of other animals:—along the riverside there's fine extensive meadows running far into the land; the woods appear very fine; they are of oak, maple, ash, beech and birch—the farther we advanced the water became deeper, and the current almost imperceptible. We encamped in a fine open wood of beech and black birch; This day was showery and cold.

21st.—Continued our way down the Penobscot winding exceedingly about 4 miles, on the whole E. b S., here it takes a large sweep to the right running rapidly over rocks and shoals; to avoid it we took to the woods and walk'd N. N. E. a mile to the foot of the shallows, where we got into our canoes and paddled East $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile, and to save another large sweep of shallows to the left, we walk'd about 200 yds S. E. and came out of the wood at a place where a river every way equal to the Penobscot joins it from the N. N. E. and increases in breadth and depth very much. The lands begin to look exceeding rich here; the country is very fine, beautifully variegated with different shades of lively green; We 10 proceeded down the river winding to and fro' but making good a S. S. E. course 26 miles to an island which parts the river in two, one part running N. E. the other E. S. E., we followed the last branch keeping the island on our left hand, and a little way down we put on shore to the right hand, and walked thro' the woods about 100 yds S. b E. to a dead creek—we followed its winding courses in our canoes about half a mile—it lead us into a round dead pond cover'd with broad leaves of a water plant. We steered over it S. by E. a quarter of a mile, its diameter, and encamped in the woods near it.

22d.—We march'd thro' the woods, a mile S. to another dead creek half a mile in length leading us also S. winding to a large lake called by our Indians *Moose-parun* ; we entered the lake at the eastern extremity, it appeared about two miles wide. Opposite to the mouth of the creek there's two small rocky islands, a little way off. Looking down the lake

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Southwestward you have to appearance a reach of six or eight miles. The country to the Eastward is mountainous.

This lake takes its name from a very remarkable mountain on the S. side, about nine miles down, the Indians say it resembles a moose-deer stooping. We found a high surf on the lake, and the wind strong at S. W. We kept the right hand shore close aboard and paddled 7½ miles directly in the winds eye. We cou'd stand it no longer, our canoes being almost filled with the spray, our flower was wetted, so we put ashore and encamped.

The wind encreased to a heavy gale with great rain—the billows on the lake ran mountain high. The lands on which we encamped are very rich, the trees are large lofty and of the best timber such as oak, walnut, 11 mapple, beech, ash and black birch, the lake is about six miles or may be 8 in width here, and begins to narrow farther down.

23d.—The wind fell before daylight and the lake was soon smooth, tho' there remain'd a heaving and long swell, however impatient to get forward we embarked and continued along the right hand shore a mile, then slaunted over to a point on the opposite shore 4 miles southerly; behind this point the lake widens on all hands and shews a noble body of water finely rayed by long low points of land running off from the shore; many rich islands cover'd with fine wood add much to the beauty of the prospect. We turned quick round the point and paddled S.S.E. keeping now on the left hand shore to a charming point richly clad with oak without underwood; from this point we steer'd S. by E. to a point on the right hand side from whence we had a noble view of the lake which now widens very much and is filled with large islands; from point to point may be 3 miles. From this last we steered S. S. W. 2 miles keeping the right hand shore and came to the head of the River Aransoak or Kennebek. Its first issue from this lake, is in a smooth clear sheet of about a hundred yards wide in a very gentle current—the surface is like a mirror; it narrows to about 40 yds in the course of a quarter of a mile, encreasing in velocity till at last it rushes furiously over a bed of rocks for 9 miles in winding courses from S. to W. and back to S., the westerly reaches being the longest. The River now widens into a circular pond half a mile over S.

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W. course, it afterwards contracts itself for 200 yds and runs W. when it widens again to a quarter of a mile runing S. W. b W. 2 mile, it then takes its ordinary width and continues a little way with a gentle current, and then rushes suddenly over a bed of steep rocks for a mile and continues rapid for a 12 mile farther S. W., where we were oblig'd to make a carrying place to avoid a large sweep in the river in very dangerous rapids. We carried our canoes, packs, &c. 4 miles in the woods in a S. W. direction; it then grew duskish and we encamped.

24th.—We proceeded with our faces to the S. W. three miles farther to the bank of a steep precipice; with difficulty we got to the rivers side and embarked, padling with the stream ten miles, sometimes in strong and dangerous rapids veering backward and forward from S. to W.; here a river coming from the Northward joins the Kinnebek; it rises as is said near the sources of the River Chaudiere. The country from the head of the river is poor, wild and rocky, cover'd with dwarf pine, spruce and unthriven birch. We continued farther 13 miles in varying courses from the S. W. to S. to a place well known to the Indians called the great carrying place. This leads to the river I have mention'd. The Interpreter, and the Indians are to return to Canada this way for which reason we went on shore and left pork and flower, well wrapt up in birch bark, and hung the bundles on the branches of trees to preserve them from wild beasts. This will serve them on their return.

The country begins to wear a more smiling aspect, and continues for 5 miles winding as before, down to a charming island where the country is past description, enchanting. The Indians much frequent this tract, on account of the incredible quantity of game with which the woods are stored, and the river here swarms with salmon, trout, and other fish.

Continuing the same route or direction for 4 miles farther we came to a fall of about eight feet in perpendicular highth most romantically beautiful: the river is confined between two rocks, and rushes over in a surprising 13 manner foaming with incredible fury: it falls into a fine rock-bound bason perfectly circular and full of fish, we encamp'd on the side of

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this bason with the fall in front, and we caught a great quantity of fine fish here in a few minutes.

25th.—Last night it froze hard. We left this very delightful spot and went with the stream S. S. E. 3 miles among fine islands cover'd with oak, beech, walnut, mapple and elm, and continued our route 8 miles farther in courses all round the compass (still among islands) to a rapid where we were oblig'd to make a carrying place of a mile: the course S. thro' a grove of fine tall pines. We kept the river on our left; we embarked at the foot of the rapid, and continuing a mile southerly we came to a cleared point of land on the left hand shore, where there was formerly a large village of the *Abenaqui* Indians, it was called *Aransoak*, now Noridgewalk, it was deserted about the year 1756, not a vestige of it now remains. Opposite to this point the Kennebek receives a river coming from the westward; on its banks we saw many haystacks, the first indication of inhabitants that we perceived, but we cou'd not descry any hut or house. Turning round the point we saw a smoak, and at some distance we came to a hut where we found two men, who had clear'd some acres of land and had sown it with wheat and rye; they intend to build a house here next year.

From this place to the nearest inhabitants is 10 miles. We continued our route and arriv'd at a number of fine settlements. We went to Capt. Jonathan Oaks's plantation; he had been settled here but a year yet he had put 300 bushels of grain into his barn this harvest. He served in the Provincials last war. He inform'd me that from his house to Seguin Island at the mouth of Kennebek is 78 miles chained.

14

The country is quite new, there's no roads open'd, there's but paths thro' the woods from settlement to settlement.

I discharged my Indians here, and instructed the Interpreter to return by the great carrying place where we left provisions.

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I gave him written instructions how to take the courses and directed him how to compute the distances, and to note the remarks of the Indians with their account of the nature of the country as they went along—and I recommended it to him, to keep it ever in his mind that the intention of this examination was to learn the most proper pass for a road.

We parted from our Indian friends and proceeded down the Kennebek in wooden canoes without meeting with anything remarkable. The country settles fast, therefore it is but reasonable to imagine that high-ways will in time be opened, by which means there will be an easy communication between Noridgewalk and Brunswick; from this last mentioned place, one may ride on horseback to Falmouth in Casco Bay, which is the last Post Town in New England and the nearest to Quebec.

We left Kennebek River at Merry-meeting bay, rowed up the river Amorescoggin to Brunswick, and from thence over land four miles to Casco Bay, embark'd there in a canoe, and arriv'd at Falmouth on Thursday the 30th of September, having been five days from Capt. Oaks's to this place, 98 miles distant. It was with the utmost difficulty that we could procure canoes to carry us along.

15

It appears by this Journal that the distance

From Quebec to Launieres the last house on the River Miles Chaudiere, in a good road is
52

From Launiere's house, to carry a road in the best path, thro' a country dry and level, (as appears by the proper route protracted) down to Noridgewalk the first and nearest settlement in New England 150

From Noridgewalk to Oaks's or Wassarunset R 10

From Wassarunset to Falmouth in Casco Bay 98

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In all from Quebec to Falmouth 310

The lands on the Kennebek are the property of some gentlemen known by the name of the Plymouth Comp'y, they will not give any encouragement to open this road.

And I have it from good authority that the Assembly will not grant one shilling towards opening a road this way, into Canada. The Publick says, let the Plymouth Company improve their property by opening high-ways, why shou'd the people contribute to make their estate valuable! Besides an opinion prevails, that all the country East of New Hampshire will be cut off from the Massachusetts Bay and made a Province bounded by Nova Scotia.

Governor Hutcheson promised to write to the Minister on this matter, and that he would recommend the plan as beneficial to commerce in general, and in particular of benefit to the Provinces of Quebec and Massachusetts.

16

At The Post Office at Falmouth in Casco-Bay, 2 d October, 1773.

Mr Child the deputy there represents, that no allowance has been made to him in lieu of the liberty of franking which was taken from him, and he got the promise of an equivalent, —he says that he advis'd the late Comptroller that he valued his postage at 40s. Str [???] ann.

He further represents that the employment is very troublesome to him, and of no manner of advantage, nay that it is a loss to him, for he cannot withstand the earnest solicitations of indigent people who have letters by the post, he delivers them, and never receives payment.

Every person who looks for a letter or a news paper freely enters his house, be it post day or not; he cannot afford to set apart a room in his house as an office; he is continually

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disturb'd in his family, he therefor begs that some other person may be appointed in his stead, unless an office is allowed him.

As naval officer, he gives daily attendance at the Custom house, under that roof there is a small room to lett, which wou'd be a commodious office for him and convenient for the Publick.

The people of Falmouth know Mr Child, they wish he may continue to be Post Master, as he is a careful man, and they are sensible of the advantage of a regular communication with the other parts on the continent.

From his general character and what I saw of him, I think he will endeavor to encrease the Revenue by every means in his power as long as he takes charge of the office. From the great numbers of people settling to the Eastward of Falmouth, I imagine that correspondence must encrease much in these parts.

17

There's two or three vessels in constant employment between Boston and Falmouth; they are called Packets, each of them makes about twenty trips yearly, and every trip they carry many hundreds of letters. Mr Child once attempted to put the Law in force and took the letter-bag of one of those vessels to the office, but it made such a bustle and noise in town that he dared never attempt it again.

The Masters of these vessels say, that each letter accompanys a package on freight, and that they will not deliver them to the Post Master for that reason: it is well known that not one letter in ten accompanys goods, yet the law is so defective that the act can never be put in force.

The Post from Boston arrives here every Saturday about four o'clock in good weather, he remains in Falmouth until Wednesday morning, and proceeds to Portsmouth 62 miles which he performs in 36 hours.

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The rider has £35 Str. [???] ann. and is paid by the office at Portsmouth, he is sober, honest and diligent.

The road from Falmouth to Portsmouth is good in summer, in winter indifferent, there's some bad bridges.

At Portsmouth in New Hampshire, 5 th October, Eleazer Russell, Dep.

His office is small and looks mean, his books are in good form and up to this day; he is a careful regular officer, he understands his business and seems to have the interest of the office at heart.

The Post from the Westward, that is the mails from Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Jersey, New York and Boston arrive at his office at 11 o'clock in good weather—in winter after a fall of snow, or heavy rain, he seldom arrives before ten o'clock at night, when the wind blows hard from 18 certain points, he is detained at the ferry at Newbury Port, for there's no passing there in a high wind.

One Stavers some years ago began to drive a stage coach between Portsmouth and Boston: his drivers hurt the office very much by carrying letters, and they were so artful that the post master cou'd not detect them; it was therefore judged proper to take this man into the pay of the office, and to give two mails weekly between Boston and Portsmouth. This was of no disadvantage to the Post office because the mails brought by the stage coach did rather more than pay £10 Str. Stavers's yearly salary.

At this day there's many stages between this place and Boston, and they hurt the office much.

Mr Russel says that the drivers cannot be detected, they have small sham bundles with each letter or they are given to the Passengers in the coach, who will without hesitation say that they are letters of recommendation which they carry.

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Mr Russel advises to keep Stavers in pay because the people have been so long accustomed to have two mails weekly, the publick wou'd raise a clamour were one taken away, and as Stavers's salary is paid from the amount of the letters he brings to the office, it is best to let things remain as they are for the present.

The coach mail (Stavers's) shou'd arrive on Saturdays at midday, but it is very irregular, depending entirely on the state of the roads, so that Mr Russel is oblig'd to attend at his office for this mail from midday until midnight to receive and deliver the letters, for it is a rule with him to do no business on Sunday—yet hitherto he has carried home all Publick letters that were not sent for in time and he has delivered them even on Sunday at his own house.

19

By the books it appears that the stage mails amount from 6 to 30 dwt.

Thus Mr Russel's time as Post Master is taken up.

On Monday evening the mails for the Westward are made up, the stage leaves Stavers's at sunrise next morning. On Wednesday the Post arrives from the Westward—in winter much attendance is requir'd on these days. On Thursday at Noon the Falmouth Post arrives; there's frequently no letters in summer. The benefit arising from this Post is but small, for correspondence is entirely carried on by the coasting vessels in summer. When they are laid up in winter for two or three months there's tollerable mails between Boston and Falmouth. On Friday the Mails for the Westward and Eastward are made up. For Newbury, Salem, Boston, &c. at 11 o'clock and for Falmouth at 10 o'clock.

On Saturday as has been mention'd the stage mail arrives and long attendance is requisite in Winter.

Mr Russel prays that he may have a quarterly allowance in lieu of the liberty he formerly enjoyed viz. to frank his own letters, sent or received, and that allowance may be made to

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him from the time that Mr Parkers circular letter depriv'd him of that perquisite. He declares on his word that it was a saving to him of £6 to £8 lawful money yearly.

He also for his own sake prays, that it may be had in remembrance, that he is oblig'd to deliver the Governors letters without receiving the postage—in the common run of the Provincial publick business he cannot receive the amount of his account under 12 months, because it must pass in Assembly. He fears that his slowness in remitting the balance of his account may appear in his disfavour.

20

6th of Octr.—I left Portsmouth to wait on Govr. Wentworth at his seat at Wolfsborough 48 miles North of Portsmouth; I carried a letter of introduction to him from Mr Foxcroft who is very desirous to have a road opened thro' any of the neighbouring Provinces into Canada to avoid lakes and water carriage, which so often detains the couriers with the mails to and from that country, to the great prejudice of the trade in that flourishing Province; and as Governor Wentworth from a superior publick spirit has exerted himself beyond belief in settling the Province under his care, even back to the boundary between New Hampshire and Canada. It is imagined nay it is certain, that thro' New Hampshire will be the best and easiest way to Canada especially considering that the roads are opened and the country settled almost up to the line of 45°. It only remains with Canada to meet New Hampshire, and I compute that there will not be much above a hundred miles to open.

I found the Governor just as he had been represented, ever willing and always ready to second any proposal that has the least tendency to be of service to the Publick or of benefit to his Province; he assured me that he would have roads open'd immediately to the very line, and that in due time, he would have convenient stages at ten to fifteen miles distance, where a change of horses might be procured at a short warning.

His Excellency recommended a Surveyor to me whom I immediately dispatch'd to Canada, to take the courses, measure the distance by computation and make remarks on a route

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prescrib'd to him, viz. From a gap in the White hills, down to the Indian village of St. Francis on a river of the same name which emptys itself into the River St. Lawrence 7 or 8 leagues above three rivers on the opposite side.

21

I saw the surveyor set out, and then took my leave of the Governor, and return'd to Portsmouth the 8th of October at night.

9th. Settled Mr Russels accounts of many years standing and receive'd the balance of his account cur't. with the General Post Office and mem. in my book of settlements with Deputys, Note: That Mr Russel takes no advantage of the course of exchange in his remittances at different times. Mr Parker the late Comptroller gave him credit in the Comptrollers books at par, but he bought bills under par which makes a considerable difference to the office, and which as he observed he might have pocketed, but in justice he accounts for it.

Mr Russel never had a commission; no copy of instructions, he begs to have both with an exemption from publick service.

In consequence of hints dropt by several people concerning the carelessness of the driver of Staver's coach with regard to letters put into his hands, I inform'd Stavers of these complaints. His son drives the coach, he was called in before me, and I gave him a severe reprimand laying before him the consequences of his want of care, and shewing him that if ever he did attempt to defraud the office by receiving money for carrying letters, and afterwards concealing it without accounting to the Post Office, he wou'd be severely punished.

This stage driver, as he is in the service of the office shou'd give bonds, shou'd take a rider's oath, and he shou'd be furnished with extracts from the Act of Parliam't relative to Riders, and if extracts were put up in publick places of Inns on the roads where stage coaches and carriers pass, shewing them the risk they run by illegal carriage of letters,

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and have the same inserted and continued for some months in all the publick papers, it might have a very good effect.

22

Left Portsmouth after dinner, and arrived at *Newbury (22 miles)*, *Bulkeley Emerson, Depy* .

On Sunday 10th did no business.

Monday 11th.—Examined the books, they were in form and up to this day: he has no office, but receives and delivers letters in his shop, he is a bookseller. He seems to be a stayed, sober man. Received the balance of the quarter ending the 5th.

The Post from Boston arrives on Tuesdays at 6 o'clock in the evening.

From Portsmouth on the same day at *one* P. M.

From Boston on Friday 6 o'clock P. M. in summer.

From Portsmouth on Friday between 4 and 5 P. M.

The mail for Boston is made up on Tuesday, one o'clock.

For the Eastward at the same time.

For Boston on Friday 4 o'clock P. M.

For the Eastward at the same time, but there's seldom any letters either for East or West. The stages and private conveyances take all.

Left a copy of Mr Foxcrofts directions to me dated 16th Sept. to settle and receive balances from the Deputy Post masters.

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Mr Emerson thinks that the want of Post-horns is a loss to the office, for by warning given by the horn many letters wou'd go by Post which are now sent by other oportunity's—the Post shou'd blow before the hour of shutting, and in passing on his way many letters wou'd be deliver'd to him.

He asks, whether, if the drivers of stages were to be paid a penny for every letter they bring to the office he might charge two pence for all such 23 letters deliverable in town. The Rider who brings the mails to this office is punctual. The office here neither encreases nor diminishes, the rece't is from £9 to £10 lawful, quarterly.

Left Newbury and proceeded 12 miles to *Ipswich, Fames Foster, Depy* .

Gone to the country; he keeps a small shop. Left directions for him in writing to send his accots. with the General Post office by next Post., directed for me at the Post office in Boston, and also to send the balance of his account, and to inform me of the days and hours of the arrival of mails at his office, and the times of the Post's departure from his office, with any proposals he may have to make for the good of the office—with his report of the riders employed.

Proceeded 12 miles to *Salem, Edward Norice, Depy* .

October 11th.—His books were not in good order, he follows the form, but they are dirty and not brought up regularly; he understands the business of a deputy. The office is kept in a small mean looking place. He teaches writing. He has no commission to act, he took charge of the office at the death of his father; he reports that every other day the stage coach goes for Boston, the drivers take many letters, so that but few are forwarded by Post to or from his office. If an information were lodged (but an informer wou'd get tar'd and feather'd) no jury wou'd find the fact; it is deem'd necessary to hinder all acts of Parliament from taking effect in 24 America. They are they say to be governed by laws of their own framing and no other.

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While Mr Norrice was making up his accounts I went down the 12th, four miles, to *Marblehead, Woodward Abrahams, Deputy* .

He was from home: his wife informs me that he accounts to Mr Hubbard, Post Master in Boston, and the quarter ending the 5th July was settled and transmitted. Wrote a letter to Mr Abrahams, as follows:

“My business with you was to look into your office books, to receive “the quarters account ending the 5th of this month, and the balance due “by you to the General Office, and to enquire if you have anything to “propose for the good of the service, or anything to represent needing “amendment, but as I have miss'd of you, I pray you to transmit the “accounts and balance to me at Mr Hubbard's in Boston by the first “Post: and be so good as to inform me of any matter which you think a “Surveyor shou'd be made acquainted with, whose business is to further “the interest of the General Post Office, and facilitate correspondence by “every possible means. I shou'd be glad to know particularly how the “mails are forwarded, since John Noble cannot ride thro' this place. I “shall leave Salem for Boston to morrow morning, where I shall remain “some days.”

In passing thro' the street in my way back to Salem, I met Mr Abrahams on his return from the country: a few minutes before my letter was put into his hands, he promised to comply with my demands. He appears to be an intelligent man; he has an employment in the Customs, and keeps the Post Office where he does Custom House business.

25

Noble, the rider, cannot go down to Marblehead at present. The smallpox is in Salem, and was he to go down with the mail he wou'd be oblig'd to undergo the ceremony of smoaking, that is, to be fumigated with brimstone; as he is of a weakly constitution he cannot submit to it, therefore he leaves the Marblehead bag to take its chance of a conveyance; opportunitys happen once or twice a day, yet it sometimes lies for days at Salem—the people in Marblehead complain of this. It is Noble's duty to send it down by

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a person sent on purpose, this rider is careful, sober and punctual; he rides all the way to Portsmouth.

On my return to Salem I settled with Mr Norice, who would not swear to his accounts as he has no commission.

The Post from Boston arrives at Salem on Tuesday 12 o'clock, and he is dispatch'd for the Eastward at 2; coming from Boston the rider goes first to Marblehead.

He returns from the Eastward every Saturday morning at 10 o'clock, and takes Marblehead on his way to Boston.

Left Salem and proceeded 21 miles to *Boston*, (*where I arrived the 13th*), *Tuthill Hubbard*, *Post Master* .

During the stay that I made in Boston, I was introduc'd to some of the principal people in town. I got information respecting the office. I learnt their complaints and heard their proposals for obviating all cause of discontent.

From time to time I consulted with Mr Hubbard about the most likely means to put everything on the best footing. Waited on His Excellency Governor Hutcheson to learn if the Province under his command would agree to open a road from the settled country on the river of Kennebek, to the boundary line dividing Massachusetts from the Province of Quebec, assuring him that Lieut. Governor Cramahe would immediately meet him from the last settlements on the river Chaudiere to the extent of his government towards the Massachusetts.

His Excellency informed me, That the troubles and confusion now subsisting in his Province, join'd to the present spirit of the people, left him but little room to imagine that any regard wou'd be paid to any proposal coming from him however beneficial to the

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Province, but that it wou'd rather be vigourously oppos'd. He said that he wou'd certainly write to the Minister on this matter.

I had the honor to dine with him on the 23d, when we talk'd over the road scheme a second time—I find that there's no prospect of receiving any assistance from the Assembly.

I also made it my business to learn the opinions of such as I know, concerning the propos'd new road. It is thought, that if a grant of money were requested for this service, the proposal wou'd be rejected—because the majority of the house have lands to the Westward. The new settlements on Kennebek, &c. drain the Western parts of the Province of their inhabitants, and reduce the value of lands, for this reason they will not encourage the settlement of the East by opening roads, or in any other way; and another reason equally weighty, is: The people imagine that all the lands lying to the Eastward of Piscataway River as far as the western boundary of Nova Scotia, will be seperated from the Massachusets, and erected into a new Province. In this case the money expended on a road into Canada this way, would be so much lost to the Province of the Massachusets.

27

I apply'd to some of the proprietors of a very extensive tract of land lying on the banks of the River of Kennebek—it is the property of the Plymouth Company: they are very sensible that a road thro' their great tract would accelerate the settlement of their lands, and in a few years double their value; but from Doctor Gardiner (a principal) I find that they imagine that they may have interest with the House of Assembly, to grant a sum for the purpose of opening a Post road thro' their lands up to the boundary between Quebec and Massachusets in the streightest direction; I find also that if they shou'd be disappointed in their expectations, they will probably open the communication themselves if they find it necessary to induce settlers, yet their attempt to obtain a grant will require much time—they will spare no pains to save their own money—thus it appears that the opening of this

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most desirable pass is at a very distant period unless some Regiments by an order from home, are put to this very useful work.

The Deputy Post Master General commanded me “to enquire minutely “into the time of the arrival of the Saturday's Post at Boston, and what “there is to hinder them from getting in by 11 or 12 o'clock in place of “the evening.”

Mr Hubbard receives the mails from the Westward, in the summer about 6 o'clock in the evening of Saturday, in winter the arrival of the Post is very uncertain, it is sometimes late on Sunday when snow, and high winds, with floating ice detains him at the different ferrys. He says, that the arrival of the Post sooner than six o'clock on Saturday evening cannot benefit the trading body in Boston, as they have until Monday at two o'clock to answer their letters.

28

The merchants nevertheless wish to have the arrival of the mails fix'd to 12 o'clock on Saturdays because if the fix'd and customary time is twelve, he may surely get in by the evening in bad weather and of course our letters will be deliver'd to us on Saturday night, at present six is the hour, but it is sometimes so late 'ere the Post arrives that we cannot get our letters out of the office until Sunday evening—for Mr Hubbards rule is to keep the office shut until sunset on Sunday.

Peter Mumford rides between Boston and New Port in Rhode Island; he has never given bond nor did he ever take a Post rider's oath. He avers that he is an expeditious rider and faithful to the office; publick report is against him; it is said that he carries more letters for his own private profit than are sent from all the offices he stops at, to the office at Boston. He transacts a great deal of business on the road, loads his carriage with bundles, buys and sells on commission, and in short but carrys the mail by the by as it helps to defray his expences. Of this I shall take no further notice here; I shall make farther enquiry's as I pass along to New Port, there tender the oath to him and bring him under bonds.

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N.B. To accomplish Mr Foxcrofts desire the time granted to the different riders must be regulated, that six hours may be gain'd in the riding work between New York and Boston, which may most certainly be done, but as I pass along from office to office I shall be enabled to ascertain this matter.

Peter Mumfords ride from Boston to New Port is 80 miles passing thro' Providence, Warren and Bristol for which service he is obliged to keep three horses and is paid £40 Str. [???] ann.

He should leave Boston at three o'clock Monday afternoon, but I am told that it is 5 or 6 ere he takes horse, he arrives at Providence, 45 miles, 29 at 9 o'clock next morning and at New Port, 35 miles farther, at 5 o'clock in the evening of Tuesday. On his return from New Port with the western mails he leaves that office on Friday, half past two P. M., passing thro' Bristol and Warren he arrives at Providence between 7 and 8 o'clock on Saturday morning, he leaves it at 9 and arrives at Boston at six in the evening in fine weather.

Thus 26 hours are requir'd to ride 80 miles. The reason of this is, the rider sleeps by the way. If this ride is too much for one man to perform let the ride be divided in two, and let there be no sleeping. Twenty hours may be given to ride 80 miles, and there will be time sufficient to feed and change horses and for the riders to attend a sufficient time at every office. There's three ferrys between Providence and New Port, one near to Providence half a mile wide, another at Warren a skow ferry, and one from the Main to Rhode Island a mile over, they are all well attended.

Let me here observe that short stages will encrease the speed of the mails, and were they all to be fix'd at 30 miles or thereby it wou'd answer many good purposes. The best wou'd be expedition, and besides letters wou'd not be so frequently entrusted to a riders care nor wou'd they be so much employed in executing commissions to retard their progress with the mails.

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Peter Mumford lives at New Port, were his ride curtailed one half he would stop at Providence. New Port has but little connection with Providence but their intercourse with Boston is great—by having two riders it wou'd be found difficult to transact business by means of the couriers between these two places.

Complaints are made of the stupidity of the man who attends the office at Boston. Mr Hubbard is not blam'd in any thing except for not employing a sharp lively fellow where expedition is always look'd for. There's 30 no runner employ'd at this office; one wou'd be useful. The riders have no Post horns.

The accounts in this office are regularly kept and punctually transmitted to the Comptroller every quarter.

Some people wish to have the Canada mail sent directly from Albany to Boston, at present the letters from thence are sent thro' New York. The whole amount of the postage of letters between Boston and Canada would not pay 1/10th part of a riders wages.

Left Boston the 25th and rode 45 miles to *Providence* .

The road is good tho' a little rocky in some places. John Carter is Deputy here, he is a printer, seemingly an active sensible man: he has had charge of the office two years.

26th.—At the Post-office—or rather the printing office; for there's no apartment appropriated for the rece't and delivery of letters, tho' they are kept lock'd up. I find that Mr Carter has never return'd his accounts.

He has been in dayly expectation to receive the books of the office, the instructions and the forms from one Cole, the former deputy, but he has put him off with excuses from day to day. This Cole's now in the country attending a county Court, when he returns, Mr Carter expects the books &c. will be deliver'd up to him, and he promises to transmit his accounts and remit whatever may be due, to the Comptroller in three weeks from this day.

Mr Carter represents "that the mails from the westward by a late alteration in the Post route now cross *five ferry's* between Naraganset and "Providence, whereas by the old route there's not so much as one ferry "to cross. The Post previous to this regulation arrived at Providence "on Friday evening at 9 o'clock, now at soonest it is Saturday morning at "nine, and in winter it is sometimes Sunday morning, Tuesday, nay even "Wednesday.

"For the mails to cross five ferrys, in the small distance of 50 miles "(two of them dangerous in winter) cannot be for the Kings service. As "an addition to this representation, he begs leave to observe, that after "the mails from the Westward arrive at New London, the printer there "extracts all advices from newspapers, which requires considerable time; "the New London paper is afterwards printed containing these extracts, "and it it sent to him by a private conveyance by way of Norwich, by "which the New York paper is also sent to him, both which he receives "12 sometimes 14 hours before the arrival of the Post."

Left Providence the 27th and the 28th arriv'd at *New Port, Thomas Vernon, Depy* .

The distance is 35 miles.

Went to the Post office which is here kept in a small room apart, I shew'd Mr Vernon my authority from Mr Foxcroft to settle accounts with him and to receive his balance. He appointed Saturday for a settlement. Saturday examin'd his books, and found them in form and order, and settled his account up to the 5th of October, 1773. His account of the arrival and departure of the Post agrees with the Boston account. He 32 is of opinion that much time is lost by Peter Mumford between New Port and Boston. He says that theres two Post offices in New Port, the King's and Mumfords, and that the revenue of the last is the greatest. It is the same in Boston, both Mumford and the rider of the upper Stages (Hyde) receive much postage for which they do not account. It is common for people who

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expect letters by Post finding none at the Post office to say “ *well there must be letters, we'll find them at Mumfords* .” It is next to impossible to put a stop to this practice in the present universal opposition to every thing connected with Great Britain. Were any Deputy Post Master to do his duty, and make a stir in such matter, he would draw on himself the odium of his neighbours and be mark'd as the friend of Slavery and oppression and a declar'd enemy to America.

The two ferrys from Rhode Island over to Naraganset are each three miles and a half over; in winter when the wind is ahead, with floating ice, it is both very difficult, and exceedingly dangerous to pass, and sometimes tho' but seldom the course of the Post is stop'd for a week, this does not happen above twice or thrice in a year.

N. B.—These ferrys can be avoided by leaving the New Port mail at Towerhill, but in this case there must be a by-rider for New Port.

On Saturday evening sat out for Bristol to settle with Mr Usher the deputy there.

Bristol

is 12 miles from New Port, a village of no trade and of very little consequence any way. The dept. was not at home, but on my return towards New Port next day I met him on the road. He promised to bring down his papers to New Port, to lay them before me as he knew not how to make up his accounts.

33

November 1st.—Mr Usher, brought his papers, and I sat down to shew him how to keep his accounts, and made them up for him to the 5th Jany, 1773—he promises to finish them soon, and send them with the balance due; he has kept the office two years, the whole sum received in that time is about £10 lawful. He has no commission nor exemption from serving as a juryman &c.

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Wrote to Mr Burr dep. at Warren to send his accounts. Saw Ben. Mumford, the rider between *New Port* and *Say Brook* . He represents that it is not possible for him to continue in the service of the office without his wages are augmented or his ride shortened, and beg leave to refer all further representation until I shall have examined his stage,—this man bears the character of a sober, diligent man, and an expeditious rider.

3d.—Peter Mumford took the oath of a Post rider, and sign'd proper bonds. I warned him of his danger in carrying letters privately for his own emolument, and that my instructions might make a deep impression on him, I wrote him a letter shewing him what he is bound to perform and enclosed a copy of his bond and oath.

5th November.—Left New Port, it blew then very hard, the ferry is three miles and a half across; the wind tho' strong was pretty fair; we cross'd in twenty minutes; from the landing over the Island Conanicut is $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile pretty good road to a second ferry of three miles; the wind increas'd and headed us; we embark'd in a terrible sea, in the open ferryboat close hauled; the man who attended the sail was late in easing off the sheets in a squall, the boat lay down and we were in great danger; the boats at these ferrys are very fine; we got over in less than an hour. Rode on four mile to Towerhill.

34

Mr Sands the master of the house lay sick in bed, I cou'd not see him. Letters are sent from different parts of the country to this house to be forwarded by Post to New Port &c. Eastward, to New London &c. Westward. Next morning saw Mr Sands very ill in bed. He has no commission but will take one.

6th.—Continued my route towards New London where I expected to arrive in the evening, but I found the road past all conception bad so that from daybreak until sunset I made but 33 miles and put up at a little tavern 4 mile east of New London. The road is one continued bed of rocks and very hilly. It is impossible for a Post to ride above 4 mile an hour in such road, and to do even that he must have a good horse, one used to such a rocky path.

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7th.—Got to the ferry at 9 o'clock in the morning and passed the River Thames a mile wide to

New London .

The ferry is very well attended, it is not difficult—they grumble at being oblig'd to carry the Post over when it is dark, or when it rains or blows, they seem much inclin'd to refuse the service but they fear the consequence.

8th.—Visited John S. Miller, the Deputy, he keeps his office in a room hir'd on purpose in the very centre of the town. He is a young man who talks sensibly of Post Office matters, and who seems to be a Post Master in his heart. His office is neat, his books fair and up, his papers are in 35 order and every thing is in due form. One bad custom has crept in at New London, the people in Mr Chews time (the former Post Master) had free access at all times to the office; Mr Miller has attempted to break this custom, but he finds he cannot, without quarreling with his friends.

Mr Miller regularly transmits his quarterly accounts to the comptroller. The whole income of his office goes to pay the rider Benjamin Mumford between Saybrook and New Port, a distance of 60 miles, with five ferrys, on the whole the most difficult and as dangerous as any in America; the road without exception the worst, for which service he is paid £55 Str. [???] ann;—he says that the number of horses he hurts thro' the badness of the roads runs away with all his profit, and that as there's no manner of perquisite for a rider between Saybrook and New Port, his wages are too small to provide him in horses and maintain his family. I firmly believe it.

It is the custom on every stage that I have surveyed, for the Post rider to execute commissions on the road—I have been informed that Peter Mumford the rider between Newport and Boston makes above £100 Str. yearly of his employment over and above his wages from the Post office.

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Benjamin Mumford petitions that his stage may be between New Port and New London and no farther, and that he may be allow'd his present salary for that service.

On consulting Mr Miller on this matter he said he wou'd assign reasons why B. Mumford should not proceed to Saybrook, and the next day he delivered a paper to me containing the following reasons:

"Mr Miller, Deputy Post Master of New London, is of opinion that "the stages from the Eastward and Westward to this town upon the present "footing is unequal to the riders, an inconveniency to the publick, and "of hurt to the Revenue, therefore begs leave to propose,

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"1st, That the Eastern rider Ben. Mumford may make his stage "between this town and Newport: it will be as much as he or any man "can perform in the time allotted him considering the ferry's at New Port "and at New London, which he must pass to perform it —He should not "proceed to Saybrook as he now does.

"2d, That the Western do meet the Eastern rider at this place on Wednesday evening, which may be done if the Western rider will make more expedition than he now does, or another rider may be appointed at "Saybrook to receive the mail from the Westward and proceed with it to "this office.

"3d, To exchange mails at this place will be extremely agreeable to the "merchants, as it will put it in their power to return answers to all the "letters they receive, the same week, which as the mails are now forwarded "they cannot do, and thus a loss arises to the Revenue as they are obliged "to send their letters by boats &c. for want of a more expeditious "conveyance.

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"4th, The reasonableness of this proposal will appear, when it is considered that this place is nearly central between New York and Boston, "there being but a few miles difference, and at Saybrook where the riders "exchange mails, there's no office.

"5th, If it be judged expedient that the above regulations take place it "will be necessary to make an alteration relative to the paym't of the "salary paid at this office to the Eastern rider, namely, that after paying "the Say Brook rider, the remainder be paid to Mumford, and for what "may fall short in this office let him apply to the Post Master at New "Port; the revenue of the New London office has not hitherto been able "to discharge a greater sum than Mumfords wages.

37

"6th, In the winter, it often happens that the Posts are detain'd at "Say Brook ferry, by ice, winds, &c. when this happens, let them give a signal to each other, and proceed farther up the river where they may "cross with ease." Signd, J. S. Miller.

After having perused the above representation and put several questions to Mr Miller, I inform'd him that I shou'd lay the matter before the Deputy General, after examining the other part of B. Mumfords stage to the Westward of New London. I desir'd him to enquire for a proper person at Saybrook or in New London, in the meantime who wou'd undertake the ride, if it should be thought proper to alter the Eastern riders stage.

Waited with impatience for Mumford's arrival from New Port. The time fixed for the arrivals from thence are Wednesday evening 6 o'clock. The rider proceeds 5 miles to the rope ferry, there he sleeps, and proceeds next morning to Say Brook 13 miles, where he arrives at 11 o'clock, he there meets the Western rider, and he exchanges mails with him and immediately sets out on his return to New London, where he arrives, in good weather at two o'clock, in winter it is three, or later: he makes no stop but proceeds to New Port, where he arrives on Friday afternoon.

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11th.—Wrote to Mr Babcock, Dep. at Westerly, whom I did not see in my way to this place, desiring him to send his accounts up to the last quarter with the balance due, to the Comp'r.

Finding it wou'd be convenient to have an hours conversation with the Western rider, I sat out for Saybrook, and arriv'd there about two o'clock, I found the road pretty good from the rope ferry, where I found old Herd the Western rider waiting Mumford's arrival: he had been here three 38 hours—it is very uncustomary for the riders to be detain'd at this season, but I conclude he finds it impossible to pass at the Rhode Island ferrys, from high contrary winds. This man Herd at 72 is strong and robust, he has been in the service 46 years; he pretends that he makes nothing by it, and says “he will give it up—that at present he only rides for his “healths sake, which induces him to keep it.”

It is well known that he has made an estate by his riding, and it is said, in the following way,

Way letters he makes his own perquisite, or rather he has done so in former times, at present each office checks him a little—He does much business on the road on commission, he is a publick carrier, and loads his horse with merchandise for people living in his route; he receives cash, and carry's money backwards and forwards, takes care of return'd horses, and in short refuses no business however it may affect his speed as Post. But for the delays occasioned by his own affairs, he might perform his ride in time, in any weather. 'Tis ridiculous to see his Majestys courier, metamorphos'd to a snail paced Carrier. He has the address to be punctual in his arrivals at New York. Both Herd and Mumford have lost weeks at Say Brook and made the impossibility of passing by reason of winds, ice,—c. an excuse for their delays, while at bottom laziness was the real cause.

By the sketch on the next page, is seen the route from New London to Saybrook; the double lines mark the Post road—the single dotted line marks away from New London but two or three miles about to a place on Connecticut River where the Post may always pass.

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Now let them in winter constantly pass this way or let them take the old road if they will.
When they find the winds too high or the passage

Route from New London to Saybrook

39 obstructed by ice let them agree on a signal to inform each other that they have gone up the river. By this means the detentions at Saybrook will be avoided, and there will be no breaks in the Post riding.

After questioning old Herd (who is not backward in sounding his own praises) on sundry matters, I asked him if he would lengthen his ride by proceeding to New London, but he peremptorily refuses to go farther than Say Brook on any consideration.

Cross'd the ferry, it is well attended, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile in width, the boats are good tho' not so large as those at Rhode Island. I proceeded 7 miles farther on, in a fine road and put up at a publick house where the Post always stops, I intended to proceed with him at whatever hour he shou'd arrive.

12th.—The Post not come up, proceeded alone towards New Haven, passing thro' well settled Townships. Killingsworth is a pleasant village, a mile long: East and West Guilford are large villages, as is Bamford likewise; there must certainly pass many letters to and from these towns, but the riders I believe make them a perquisite, as there's no offices in these places to check them. The road is very good. The ferry at New Haven, or rather two miles from it is about 100 yds wide and is pretty well attended; from the ferry to the town the road was good.

Many people ask'd me if I had not met the Post driving some oxen; it seems he had agreed to bring some along with him.

40

New Haven, Christopher Kilby, Deputy.

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This is a large flourishing Sea Port Town. Went to the Post-Office.

13th—his books: questioned him and found that he understands his business thoroughly; he laments that he cannot put the Acts of Parliament in force. He says that if every vessel arriving at this port were to send her letters to the office the income wou'd be doubled and the revenue increas'd in other parts; but when he sends to the Ship Masters, they insult and threaten his messengers; the Custom House officers tho' directed by Act of Parliament to admit no vessel to entry without the Post Masters certificate, take no notice of the act.

He has remitted the last quarters accounts with the balance due thereon to the Comptroller. He complains much of the Post riders; he begs that the complaints may not appear to have come from him, because the riders being of service to the people on the road have many friends in the country as well as in town, and the name of informer (which his official representations would incur from his neighbours) wou'd hurt him in his business, but in conscience he looks on himself as obligated to represent the following matters:

“That the riders come loaded with bundles, packages, boxes, canisters, “&c.every package has a letter affixed to it, which the rider claims as “his own property and perquisite; nay sometimes a small bundle of chips, “straw or old paper accompanys a seal'd packet or large letter, and the “riders insist that such letters are exempted from postage.”

“The riders have told Mr Kilby that the Devil might ride for them if “these way letters and packets were to be taken from them. In short, they 41 “come so loaded that it is impossible for them to come in time. The “load of news papers is so very great that the printers can afford a sum “of £60 yearly for the bare carriage.”

“The Portmanteaus seldom come locked: the consequence is that the “riders stuff them with bundles of shoes, stockings, canisters, money or “any thing they get to carry, which tears the Portmanteaus, and rubs the “letters to pieces—this should be prevented by locking the mails.”

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From the representation of Mr Kilby and if it be true, that they ride off the road to deliver summons's and buy oxen on commission and drive them while they have his Majesty's mails under their care, it is impossible that they can be punctual in their arrivals.

If their Bonds are renewed and the oath tendered to them again, and if they are commanded not to employ a rider who has not previously taken the oath, perhaps it wou'd make an impression on them.

Every rider shou'd be furnished with extracts from the several acts of Parliament and short set of instructions deliver'd to him that he may never plead ignorance.

If the rides were reduced to 30 miles, the riders well paid and kept strictly to their duty, I am fully convinced that the mails wou'd be forwarded with speed, and the Revenue wou'd be greatly increased by this means, as no body wou'd chuse to risk a letter for a place at a distance, which must unavoidably pass thro' the hands of many different riders, neither wou'd the riders chuse to take charge of it.

Herd and Peat are concerned in the riding work—they both live at Stratford, miles to the Eastward of New York. They carry the mail week and week about.

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Herd takes it up from Peate on his return home and proceeds with it to the office at

Norwalk on Friday 22 miles,

New York on Saturday 55

Norwalk returning Tuesday 67

New Haven on Wednesday 33

Saybrook on Thursday 44

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Stratford where Peate takes it Friday 58

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Peate takes the same Tour, and so alternately taking eight days to ride 279 miles, which is but 35 miles a day.

They may pretend that they are at great expence for horses; it is only a pretence. An ass cou'd travel faster, they seldom or never change horses.

They have excuses always ready framed when they come in late—"their horses lost shoes"—"they were detained at ferrys."—It is their own business alone which detains them. They have sometimes said that it was too hot to ride and at other times that it rain'd and they did not chuse to get wet.

The lower Post shou'd arrive on Wednesday at 12 o'clock, but it is often 3 and later; they are dispatch'd from the office immediately, yet they art seen in Town two hours afterwards transacting business on commission; he returns or rather ought to return on Thursday evening about six, but it is very often later.

The upper rider or he who goes by Springfield, Hartford &c. to Boston shou'd arrive at this office from New York on Saturday morning 8 o'clock 43 but he makes it frequently 11 or 12 ere he gets in. He returns from Hartford on Monday night at 7 o'clock. It is remark'd that when the sons ride (Herd often employs his sons) they get in in time, they are young men and not so much employ'd in the commission business.

Mr Kilby is oblig'd to attend the office on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and on Mondays, sometimes all the day and part of the night. If the riders did but their duty it wou'd ease him much. His office does not neat him above £12 Str. [???] annum. He begs to have some allowance in consideration of his great trouble and close attendance. He keeps his office in a small corner of a very small shop.

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While I was in the office the rider for Hartford arriv'd, it was 11 o'clock. His Portmanteau was not lock'd, it was stuff'd with bundles of different kinds, and crammed with news papers: the letters for the different stages were not put up in bags, the rider had saddle bags quite full besides, so that his horse (a poor looking beast) was loaded too much to make the necessary speed.

After settling with Mr Kilby, and instructing him in his duty relative to checking the riders, I left New Haven and proceeded 21 miles to

Fairfield.

The road is stoney in some places, but a good road on horseback.

The High Sherref for the county waited on me, and represented that an office is much wanted in this Town to hinder the impositions of the Post riders. He informs me Herd not long since deliver'd to him a letter from New York mark'd in red ink 2, which he did understand to be 2 dwt. or 6d. Str., but the rider wou'd not deliver it to him, unless he wou'd pay 44 him two shillings lawful money equal to i # of a Spanish milled dollar, which he was oblig'd to do knowing the letter to be of consequence—he show'd me the office mark, it was a single letter mark'd 2 dwt.—he further says that this is an ordinary practice with the post riders, and it has more than once happened to him.

A letter was deliver'd to the rider at New York as it was too late to go in the mail; he brought it here, but wou'd not deliver it without receiving 3s. for it tho' but single.

He seems assured that an office here wou'd benefit the Revenue, as there's numbers of letters for this place in a year, and as this is the best settled county in Connecticut, lie thinks it wou'd help its trade and be of particular advantage to the people of the Town especially when the court sits here.

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If the Post Master General shall see it proper to establish an office here, Mr Burr would recommend the care of it to Mr Elijah Abel, for whose good conduct he will become bound.

He says that Andrew (old Herds son) is a careful man, but Ebenezer (another son) exacts and is careless.

Rested here all Sunday, next day, the 15th, proceeded 12 miles in broken stoney road to *Norwalk. Mr Belding, Post Master* .

Examined his books and found them in order, he keeps his office in a small apartment lock'd up. He has not remitted his last quarters accounts; he said he wou'd do it very soon and remit the balance of about £5 lawful.

The yearly amount of Postage here does not exceed £20.

45

The rider for the Lower stage arrives here from New York on Tuesday at one o'clock and returns from the Eastward on Friday evening at 6 o'clock.

The upper rider to Hartford arrives from New York on Friday at one o'clock and returns from Hartford on Tuesday about six o'clock in the evening but this is only when the roads are good: in winter the riders are very irregular.

On taking notice to Mr Belding that there is no way letters enter'd in his books, he remark'd that the riders undoubtedly pocketed the money collected for way letters, of which there comes many as he says, within his delivery.

The riders sometimes inadvertently put letters into the office which they wish to conceal, not a great while since there was one put into the office by the rider mark'd Postage paid. Mr Belding demanded the money of him for that letter, but he obstinately refus'd to

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pay it, insisting that all letters he cou'd pick up between any two offices were of right his perquisite.

As a proof that the couriers conceal large sums from the office which are raised from way letters, Mr Beldings information is sufficient.

Before he had charge of the office the riders used to leave many letters under his care, for which he collected the money, and he accounted with them weekly, but since he has been appointed Post Master they do not shew him one single letter; yet he knows that they bring many every trip and leave many behind them with a friend who collects the money for them in their absence.

In short, I find that it is the constant practice of all the riders between New York and Boston to defraud the Revenue as much as they can in pocketing the postage of all way letters. Every Deputy Post Master complains against them for this practice, and for their shameful tardiness; 46 likewise of the barefaced custom of making pack beasts of the horses which carry His Majesty's Mails.

Every Post Master making complaint, or giving official information, begs that his name may never be mention'd as having made any of those representations.

17th.—Left Norwalk and proceeded 41 miles to Kingsbridge in good road, and next morning rode 15 miles in very fine road, and arrived at *New York*,

Where the General Post Office is kept under the care of John Antill, acting for Alexander Colden Esq., the Deputy Post Master.

I remain'd at New York untill I had Mr Foxcroft's permission to proceed, which was not before the 6th of December; as he was in dayly expectation of the arrival of the October Packet from England, he was unwilling that I shou'd leave New York before she came

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in, because he look'd for instructions for the Surveyor by her, from which he intended to model a set of Instructions for me.

In the mean time I was employed in visiting Mr Colden, and learning Mr Foxcrofts opinions concerning, and plans and intentions for the better regulation of all matters relative to the Post office, impressing them on my memory that in the course of my survey I might apply that instruction to the benefit of the office as circumstances might point out.

The books in this office are regularly kept, and the quarterly accounts regularly delivered to the comptroller.

Great dispatch is given to the different riders, who are, punctually sent off at the stated hours.

47

Soon after the arrival of a mail the letters are quickly deliv'd by a runner always in time for answers to be return'd in course; this regulation gives much satisfaction to the publick.

There's some matters respecting the management of this office, and attendance given, which Mr Foxcroft finds great fault with. As he is on the spot, he will check the acting Post Master and his clerk, and put every thing on a proper footing, I therefore make no mention further of the New York office, only to note the dayly business there done, and to add a remark or two of Mr Antills.

48

POST DAYS at NEW YORK

MONDAY. TUESDAY. WEDNESDAY. A mail from Philada arrives at 8 and goes out at 10 in the morning, very regularly. At 12 the Boston Post by the way of New Haven New London, Rhode Island and Providence is dispatched. This is called the lower road. The Quebec Post by way of Albany arrives at 4 o'clock P. M., he is very regular. The Boston Mail by way of Hartford called the upper road, is irregular in his arrivals, for reasons assign'd in this Journal under the Boston head, but in common he arrives between 5 in the

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evening and 10 at night. The Albany Post which carries the Canadian Mails is sent off at 11 A. M. A mail arrives from Philadelphia at 10 and the Post returns at 12. The Packet Mail is made up and dispatched from this office the first Wednesday of every month at 12 o'clock at night. THURSDAY. FRIDAY. SATURDAY. The Post for Boston by New Haven, Hartford and Springfield, called the upper road is The Post from Phila^a arrives at 11 o'clock A. M. and returns at one o'clock. A Post from Boston by the lower road arrives between 5 and 10 at night, sometimes it is Sunday, for reasons assign'd sent off at noon. under the Boston head. 49

Mr Antill wishes that the letters sent from England by the Packet cou'd be sorted in London, each city its different bundle viz. N. York, Phila^a, Boston, Quebec, Montreal, &c.; his reason for mentioning this wish is, that it often does happen that there is not time to assort them before the departures of the different riders or at least of some of them, by which means they lie in the office untill next post day which makes eight days difference to Canada for instance when the Packets arrive on Wednesday forenoon.

He further says, that instead of charging this office (which tho' called the General Office, is to all intents and purposes managed and conducted as are all the other offices, and in like manner, accountable once in every quarter to the Comptroller) with the letters from England, the Comptroller shou'd be made accountable for them, and he shou'd charge each office with the English bills.

I remark that there's a column in every deputys accounts for missent and forwarded letters, Mr Antill can easily take credit for all the letters charged to his office, which he forwards to other offices as heretofore.

29th.—The October packet boat, Duke of Cumberland, Capt. Mitchell arriv'd at New York. There came no Instructions for a Surveyor; therefore Mr Foxcroft concluded, that it would be best for me to proceed immediately to Charles Town in South Carolina, there to take orders and directions from Mr. Roupell the Dep. Gen. for the Southern district and to make my Survey there beginning at the Southern extremity, and so proceed regularly Northward, as perhaps by the time I reach Suffolk in Virginia, the most southern Post Town in the

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northern district, Instructions may arrive from England whereby Mr Foxcroft will be enabled to 50 give me more ample and clear directions than he can at present do and he will have them waiting my arrival at Suffolk.

This arrangement being made, it only remains to write to England by the Packet which will sail on Thursday the 2d of Decr., advising the Post Master General of my intended route which Mr Foxcroft designs to do.

6th December.—I left New York in company with Mr Foxcroft for Philadelphia referring the survey of the offices this way until my return from Carolina.

8th.—Got to Philadelphia. Just look'd superficially over matters in the office there, the books were neat clean and in proper form and order, every thing in and about the office had the air of regularity and care.

9th.—At four o'clock afternoon I embark'd in a vessel bound to Charles Town in South Carolina where I arriv'd the 14th at noon; the distance run is 750 miles; we had fair winds and weather remarkable fine and warm.

51

SOUTHERN DISTRICT. CHARLES TOWN IN SO: CAROLINA.

December the 14th 1773.—Immediately on my arrival I went to Mr Roupell's house, he was not at home, I left Mr Foxcrofts letter of introduction at his house, and afterwards went to the Post-Office, which is kept by the Secretary in a room in the most frequented coffee house in the most publick part of the Town; there I left my name, my business and a direction to my lodging in case Mr Roupell should have immediate commands for me.

15th.—Waited on Mr Roupell in the morning to inform him that I was ready to receive and obey his orders.

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From the 15th December to the 1st January following at times employed in examining into former transactions in this General Office, previous to Mr. Roupells appointment, and found the Books, accounts, papers and every thing relative to the former management in the greatest confusion, so as to render it impossible from them, to learn the true state of the offices in this district.

I found that Mr Roupell had been at a great deal of pains to gather knowledge of matters in his District; he gave me all lights that he had been able to collect, and nothing further with respect to the debts due by 52 the different deputys could be known, until things were compared with his sketch, at the different offices.

We plan'd new regulations and proposed proper forms which perhaps may be necessary hereafter to follow; and thus having settled matters with Mr Roupell I left Charles Town (after receiving written directions, on the 1st of January, accompanied by the contractor for the riding north to Wilmington, a ride of 180 miles; Mr Roupell reported him to be a careful diligent man; we therefor concluded that it would be for the good of the service to hire him as a guide, that we might be able to judge of his ability to undertake the ride between Charles Town and Savannah, and both partys having examined the road, a contract might immediately be enter'd into on such reasonable terms as the nature of the route wou'd admit.

We left the Town in the morning. I was in a Solo chair, Wills the guide was on horseback, leading a horse to relieve the chair horse, for in this country no single horse that one can hire is able to perform such a Journey. In this Province Travelling is most extravagantly expensive.

From Charles Town to Ashley ferry is 10 miles in a very level road, but we wade thro' a deep heavy sand very fatiguing to horses; this ferry is well attended; their flats or skows as they are called, are good, and drawn over the river about 30 yards wide, by a rope. The weather was very warm, we chang'd our horses and proceeded six miles to Rantoal

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bridge, the roads still sandy and heavy tho' not so deep; here and there we got a peep of a plantation thro' the dull pine trees that shade the road. In the cleared places the surface is scantily cover'd with rank russet weeds. We see no verdant fields as to the Northward, nothing but Pine, Sand, and 53 Swamp, the branches of the trees are over hung with grey thready moss resembling the shaggy hair of a he goat.

One of the horses gave out here; we proceeded after dinner with the first horse 18 miles in a road not so heavy as that we have passed; this horse also requir'd a constant whip, it wou'd require four such beasts to make common speed on this road—the horses of this country are starv'd, weak, lean, small brutes. There's hardly a possibility of getting forward without one's own horses, but on these roads they run a risk of being starved, for there's nothing to be had, but the leaves of Indian corn dried instead of hay, and in lieu of oats they give them Indian corn which founders a Northward horse. It is a shocking country to travel in, both for man and beast. Slept at Ponpon, a small village 34 miles from Charles Town; there's a tollerable Tavern here.

2d.—Proceeded 7 miles to Acheepoo bridge over a small River, 16 miles farther we halted to dine; the road is good, in a streight line cut thro' pine woods, now and then we see a swamp, consequently a rice plantation these situations are very unhealthy; we came sometimes to avenues leading from the high road terminated by farm houses at a quarter, half and sometimes three quarters of a mile distant. After dinner we rode on, but at the end of four miles our horses were so tired, that we were obliged to remain here, the place is called Pocotalago; it rained all day; thick stinking fogs hung o'er every swamp. We could not find a horse here to hire, or for sale.

3d.—Next morning proceeded 5 miles to Coosawhatchay river over which was once a bridge which is now broken down; they keep a very bad 54 skow here, very ill attended; from hence we went on nine miles to a poor hut without windows called a Tavern, and could go no farther, our horses being quite knocked up.

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The weather was rainy, raw and dull, the road was good and streight thro' pine barren, gloomy and unpleasingly uniform. The promise of extravagant payment cou'd not procure a horse for hire; I was obliged to buy a small creature, the best of half a dozen for £5 Str.

We put up at this miserable hut and there remain'd until next day, that we set out early in the morning very dark and in heavy rain.

4th.—With my new purchase in the chair, and leading the fatigued horse we rode 16 miles to Purysburg, wet to the skin, the rain had soak'd thro' my portmanteau. The road is very streight, some parts of it is clayey, but few farms in the way.

Purysburg is a stragling village on the River of Savannah about 38 miles from its mouth, it was orginally settled by French protestants, they make silk here but in very small quantities.

We remain'd here three hours to dry ourselves, and then embark'd in a wooden canoe rowed by three Negroes, and in about four hours and a half got down with the tide to Savannah, the distance is 24 miles. The water of the river is very thick, its shore is a stinking mud; the land on each side is low and swampy. Halfway down we see plantations, the farm houses are built on the rivers side on hills of sand called bluffs, some are built in low situations, and are surrounded when the River overflows. The tide flows within 6 miles of Purysburg.

I sent Mr Roupells letter immediately to Mr Thomson the Deputy; he waited on me, and we chatted on office business.

55

He declines keeping the office any longer in his own name, but he will superintend it, and find a person qualified to take charge of it, and he wishes for the interest of the office to preserve an authority over him.

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Mr Thomson reports that many people of whom better things might be expected, rather than send their letters in the Mail, will send for the rider and make a private bargain with him to carry their dispatches; the riders are but too apt to secret letters for their own emolument.

One Mackenfuss rides between Charles Town and St. Augustine in East Florida; after the arrival of the Packet boats in Charles Town, he sets out with the Mail for Savannah, Sunbury and St. Augustine and returns. This trip he takes twelve times in the year. On one of those trips he fell sick and employed a man to ride for him, this man came to office drunk, he deliver'd about 50 loose letters to Mr Thomson. Next day he return'd to the office and demanded the letters as his own perquisite, saying that it had been the former practice and that he had been instructed to follow it. Thus was Makenfuss charg'd with an unwarrantable practice, but when he was question'd on this matter he denied that he had ever taken any money in this way.

This points out the necessity of obliging the riders and their servants to take the oaths and to give bond, and to furnish them with printed abstracts from the acts touching their duty.

The Gentlemen in Sunbury have often earnestly applied for a Post between their Town and Savannah, Sunbury is a thriving place, Trade encreases there rapidly; they labour under many disadvantages for want of a speedy way of conveying letters to and from their Town.

It is thought that if there was a weekly post establish'd between Charles Town and Savannah the Postages wou'd far exceed the expence of the riding work.

56

By vessels from different parts of England to Charles Town, many letters are sent for people in Savannah, Sunberry and St. Augustine, these go to the care of some persons in

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Charles Town, who forward them by the first coaster offering; no man in these parts wou'd think of forwarding a letter by water if there was an opportunity by land.

Now if a weekly post were here established, it wou'd be proper to advertise it in the London Papers for sometime, and in the Carolina, Georgia and Florida coffee houses, to make the publick and especially the London Merchants trading to these parts acquainted with the dispatch with which their letters can be conveyed from Charles Town to all parts Southward.

It may be here observed. That the present act obliging Masters of Vessels to carry their letters to the Post office is of no effect in America, they have no inclination to pay obedience to any revenue act, and at present they say that if they are obliged to put letters into the Post office they must pay for them before they can get them out again, and this is one mode of taking money from them without their consent, therefor they will pay as little regard to that law as is possible to be done, and it can easily be evaded, since the Master has only to say: Every letter that I have on board concerns my cargo, and therefore I shall not deliver one of them at the Post office.

If the Master of every vessel were obliged immediately on his arrival to go to the Post office and there make oath,—“That the letters now deliver'd “are all the letters, which came in his vessel, whether committed to his “care or the care of any person on board, to the best of his belief and “knowledge, excepting such as he knows to concern the cargo,”—the Revenue would encrease amazingly.

57

It is further to be observed that very few collectors observe to require the Post Master's certificate ere he admit the vessel to an entry.

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If the present act cannot be amended a strict order from the Treasury to the Commissioners of the Customs in America to issue their commands to all Collectors for this purpose, will be of service.

To return to the Sunbury people they propose to raise money by subscription towards paying a rider between that place and Savannah, indeed 13 Gentlemen have already subscribed £20 Str. for this purpose.

The 5th went with Mr Thomson to the Post-Office where I found every thing in the best order, he is an excellent officer and has the encrease of the Revenue at heart.

The whole amount of the postage received at his Office is £ 75 Str. consequently at 20 [??] ct. his salary will amount to £15.

Nota .—There's no inland postage charged by Mr Thomson on the letters which he receives here to go by the Packet from Charles Town to Falmouth and by the Post Master's bill I perceived that there never has been any inland postage charg'd from Charles Town to this place; and I am apt to think that none has ever been charged to and from St. Augustine. On my return to Charles Town this matter shall be enquir'd into.

The late Mr Stevens Sec'y to Mr Delancy sent a form to Mr Thomson by which to keep his accounts; by it he was directed to take a commission on all letters passing through his office, he perceived that it was an error, and therefor never charged commission excepting on the moneys received by him for Postage.

Mr Thomson is collector of the Port of Savannah, and obliges all Captains to bring their letters to him before he will admit them to an entry, 58 but he complains that under the pretence of letters belonging to the cargo, not one half is ever deliver'd at the office.

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Waited on Governor Wright. His Excellency urges the necessity of a Post between this place and Charles Town; he is persuaded that it will encrease the Revenue, and he promises to do every thing in his power to promote its intrests.

Demanded a settlement of Dr Fraser's accounts; he was a deputy in Mr Delancy's time, but as I before observed the Books of the General Office, were not kept regularly, and his debt cou'd not be ascertained from them.

He says he cannot settle with me because his children and negroes in his absence from home got into his office and destroy'd his Papers, but as soon as Mr Roupell will send him an account of the debt, he will pay it. He believes it is about £27 Str. this he said before me and in presence of Mr Thompson.

The Kings Attorney was in the Country but Mr Thompson will wait on him at his return and demand the sum recovered by him from one Whitefield, a former D. Post Mr, and when he receives it he will remit it to Mr Roupell.

I saw many of the principal people in Town; they all press hard to have a weekly post established between this place and Charles Town. They say, that from their Commercial connections they are fully persuaded that there will pass more letters between the two places than will pay the expence of riding. Whenever a regular and speedy conveyance by land is established correspondence will much encrease.

As the Post from the Northward arrives at Charles Town on Saturday evening, the route and the Post days may be as follows, then Sunbury will be included.

59

Let the mail for Savannah be made up at the General Post-office on Saturday night and leave Charles Town on Sunday at day break, and arrive at Savannah on Tuesday, and from thence let the Post for Sunbury set out an hour after, and arrive there on the next morning, Wednesday. Let him remain there but a few hours and return and be in

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Savannah on Thursday morning; The Mail for Charles Town may be dispatched at midday, and arrive there on Saturday.

The present expence of a monthly rider.

Mackenfuss has £16 [???] Trip from Charles Town to St. Augustine via Savannah; say that he makes 12 Journeys in the year, it will cost £192

A rider from Charles Town to Savannah to ride once a week may cost £100

From Savannah to Sunbury 40

The letters for St. Augustine, will be forwarded by express from Sunbury and may perhaps cost £8 [???] Trip. Say 12 trips in a year 96

236

Encrease of Expense £44

to establish a weekly Post which will do more than pay the expense immediately.

60

6th.—After a conversation with Mr Thompson on office affairs, I took my leave and went with the tide up to Purysburg where my horses were left.

Bouche, who keeps Tavern here wou'd be a proper person to take charge of an office in this place if it shall be found necessary to have a house of receipt and delivery in Purysburg.

Rode 16 miles to a miserable hut, called a Tavern and there put up; the roads are generally deep in their causeways which lead through swamps, after rain; the other parts of the roads are generally good, I mean between Charles Town and Savannah, except near the capital they are heavy and sandy, all the bridges are in bad repair. A stranger

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conceives a disadvantageous idea of the internal Police of this rich Province from the ruinous state of these publick matters.

It seems that the present difference subsisting between the Governor and the house of assembly has put a stop to all Publick business. The house voted and actually did remit £1500 of the publick money for the use of Mr Wilkes without the Governors consent, or without asking leave, until this money is repaid back to the Treasury, the Gov'r will pass no Law. Thus all publick order is at a stand.

7th.—Set off early in the morning, and rode 9 miles to the ferry of Coosawhatchay, there we found the Skow aground, we were obliged to hire four negroes to float it.

The country back of Pocotolago is pretty well settled 'tis said, one Vanbibber lives here on the side of the road, he keeps Tavern, his house wou'd be a proper place for the rider to leave letters at, and to take up letters there left to be forwarded.

61

Proceeded 19, some say 22, miles; the road is clayey in some parts, and always muddy after rain, from Acheepoo we rode 7 miles to Ponpon, where I spoke with Mr McKenzie one of the principal merchants in this village, his opinion is that but few letters wou'd pass by post to or from this place as there's dayly oportunities for Town; yet in case it may be found proper to have an office here, he would recommend a Mr Wallace or a Mr Herbertson to take charge of it.

8th.—Left Ponpon in snow, hail, sleet and rain alternately, excessively cold, to Ashley ferry, 24 miles and from the ferry to town 10 miles, where I arrived in the evening.

I observe that there's many crossroads in the way between Charles Town and Savannah and no directions set up to guide a stranger, it is impossible that he should keep the road he wishes to follow.

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The road on the whole may be called good, it is heavy in some parts, the bridges are in bad repair, there's three ferry's in the way, Ashley, Coosawhatchay and the Savannah River.

9th, 10th, 11th.—Remain'd in Charles Town consulting with Mr Roupell, and preparing for the Survey of the offices to the Northward.

12th.—Received my despatches from Mr Roupell in the afternoon, found the boat which was to carry me over or rather up Coupar River was aground, so that I was detain'd untill morning.

13th.—Mr Wills the Contractor for this ride to Wilmington agreed to accompany me, that we might view the road and learn his riders conduct, and common mode of proceeding.

62

We proceeded to Hobcau 4 miles in a boat, and on horseback 17 miles before dinner, and 23½ after dinner to Santee ferry—the road very good, but sandy in a few places. The taverns are inconceivably bad.

To travel with comfort through this part of the world, a stranger shou'd be furnished with letters of recommendation to the Gentlemen and Planters living on the road, but to a man who has business to mind this method of travelling wou'd be attended with inconvenience for the hospitable Americans kill you with kindness, and detain you from pursuing your journey, and one wou'd be obliged sometimes to ride 6 or 8 miles out of the road to get to the gentlemen's seat, at which you intend to lodge.

14th.—Cross'd Santee River about 200 yards broad in a good skow, we found a most shocking bad piece of road, from the river's side a mile and a quarter through a swamp, called Lynch's causeway. It is a tract of boggy land, the road thro' it is made of logs of wood laid crossways, and cover'd over with the mud of this bog; after rain it is a mere puddle. The horses sunk between the logs up to the belly. The rider with great reason

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complains much of this causeway, as it is next to impassable sometimes, and in the best of weather he runs a risk of breaking his horses legs and his own neck.

Nothing can be done in a publick way until the affair of the grant to Wilkes is settled.

At the end of the bad causeway there's another ferry of about 100 yards wide, well attended. 11½ miles farther is Sampit ferry opposite to George Town very ill attended; it is private property. The rider says that he is detain'd here six hours sometimes. We got over to George Town with some difficulty. This is a thriving place, vessels drawing 13 foot water can load 63 here. The Town is 18 mile from the sea, its trade encreases and consequently its correspondence. There has been no deputy here since Mr Tyghe died in October.

I examined a book which was shown me as the only book he had ever kept, but there was nothing in it but a few memorandums of debts due by the towns people for postages—mere triffls. I found Post Masters bills from Charles Town but none from any other place. The debt due by him must be collected from the books at Charles Town and at Wilmington. There's no check for way letters received by him. Since his death the mail has been generally deliver'd at the Tavern, and the Tavern keeper accounted to order from Charles Town.

The people in town two months ago strongly recommended one James Robertson to be deputy, to whom Mr Roupell sent a commission and instructions by me; which I was directed to leave with Doctor Gibb to be deliver'd on Robertson's taking the oath and giving bond.

I went to Robertsons and gave him some directions, and shew'd him how to keep his accounts.

There never has yet been more than £5 [???] ann. received in this place, but it will certainly encrease.

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After having instructed Mr Robertson and deliver'd the first mail to him, I left George Town and embark'd with our horses in a flat, and went down the River Sampit half a mile to its mouth where Pedie, Wacomán and Black River join and form a bay 2½ mile across. When the wind blows but a little it is impassable for flats, and there's no ferry boat for horses kept here, at this ferry the Post runs many risks, and he is often detain'd by winds. When we got to the other side the sun was not an hour high, and we had 14 miles to ride thro' the woods in a very crooked path. We lost our way and found ourselves on the sea shore. We came to an indigo plantation where there was nothing for our horses; they told us that we were three miles from a tavern; they gave us a negroe to conduct us in the dark, when we got there we were told from within to go about our business, they kept no publick house, nor had they anything for our horses. It was ten o'clock, quite dark, our horses were fatigued, we were tir'd, and on being told that it was 14 miles to the next house, we beg'd we entreated we prayed to be let in. At last the door was open'd by an old, infirm, walking skeleton, there was no soul in the house beside but his cripple wife.

The old man was prevail'd on, by the promise of an exorbitant price to spare us some corn and corn blades for our horses, and we enclos'd them in a field of sand.

There was no bread in the house and nothing but bad water to drink—he had no bed—I pass'd the night in a chair, often looking out for day.

15th.—Set out before sunrise, and at the end of 17 miles saw some plantations, we rode thro' heavy white sand, the road runs parallel with Wacomán River, and is never more than two miles distant from it. On all rivers there's a stripe of swamp pretty well settled in common, but the pine woods intercept one's view and render the road dreary indeed.

We stop'd at a farm house where we were very politely receiv'd, and they gave us the best they had. They made their cakes of Indian meal and roasted them before the fire. They never eat wheaten bread.

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We proceeded a few perches to the sea side, here we found it half ebb, a firm hard beach, it is called Long bay, which appears not to be a bay but a streight strand of $14\frac{3}{4}$ miles in length; it can be passed only at ebbing 65 tide, you have the Atlantic on the right, and great hillocks of loose sand on the left. At the end of the $14\frac{3}{4}$ mile we struck of to the left, at an inlet to the sea, which at high water makes a large pond behind the sand hills; these inlets are called Swashes in these countrys. Leaving the beach we ride thro' pine woods $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the first house, here we got a dinner by way of favour and paid well for it. The man keeps no tavern, but he takes money for his victuals and toddy; at such houses a parcel of ragged children and dirty servants are set down at table with every traveller. Proceeded 7 miles farther and were well receiv'd by an hospitable planter, and with him we remain'd the night.

6th.—Left our hearty Planter, and rode $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles thro' heavy sand to a house called the Boundary house, because the line dividing South from North Carolina runs thro' the middle of it, one half of the hall is in one Province and the other half in another.

From this house we continued our journey in a road thro' a pine barren, the stumps of trees are covered with rank wither'd grass, which makes riding dangerous; Wills at the end of 14 miles was taken with a fit of fever and ague, I was obliged to stop for him at a log hut called a Tavern. In a few hours his fit went off, and we proceeded $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Lockwood's folly, and remained there all night.

Half a mile from the log Tavern, there's a swamp without any causeway, after rain it is very dangerous, the rider is often stop'd here; the road is bad farther. Thus far there seems that no care is taken of the roads in this Province.

66

17th.—Good road 5 miles to a small log house; near it there's two bad bridges, and a little farther there's a very bad bridge over a run of water, and a very long bad causeway after it. From the last log house we rode 9 miles and then the road turns short off to the right

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leading directly to Brunswick. We proceeded streight forward thro' deep sand to a saw mill 7 miles and from thence to a Tavern two miles from Wilmington, is 14 miles farther in a deep sandy road, without a single hut, and we met but one traveller all this day. From this Tavern we see the town of Wilmington at the end of an avenue cut through an island, two miles across; this island is in Cape Fear River, and lyes in the manner here described:

The island is a swamp, the road is laid with logs of trees, many of them are decay'd, so that the causeway is quite broken and full of large holes, in many places 'tis with difficulty that one can pass it on foot, with a horse 'tis just possible. This public avenue to the most flourishing town in the Province, will induce a stranger to believe, that the people in this country have no Laws, such is the report concerning North Carolina. This bad swamp detains the Post.

I passed the first ferry in a small leaky flat, the second in a large one but very wet.

67

Went to the Tavern, and while I sat there, the Post rider deliver'd a parcel of newspapers to a person in the room, demanding 2s. for his trouble, the man to whom it was deliver'd open'd it and took a letter out of it; on seeing this I reprimanded the rider in presence of a good many, and forbid him to take any money for the carriage of the bundle—telling him at the same time that he had err'd thro' ignorance, but that I shou'd take care that the printer shou'd not defraud the office a second time, for that he shou'd never be permitted again to send a newspaper by any of His Majestys riders.

Took a lodging in Wilmington, Mr Hooper the deputy waited on me.

On the whole, the road from Charles Town to Wilmington is certainly the most tedious and disagreeable of any on the Continent of North America, it is through a poor, sandy, barren, gloomy country without accomodations for travellers. Death is painted in the countenances of those you meet, that indeed happens but seldom on the road. Neither man nor beast can stand a long journey thro' so bad a country where there's much fatigue

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and no refreshment; what must it be in their violent heats, when I found it so bad in the month of January!

When the Post comes to be well regulated there must be at least four changes of horses to carry on things with the necessary despatch on this road. Riding in the Southern Provinces must always be attended with much more expense than in the Northern. The difference in the price of horses is a great object, and then provender to the Southward is bad, scarce and dear, and the unhealthiness of the climate, soon wears out the best constitutions when exposed to the sun in the day, and the night dews.

18th.—Wrote to Mr Roupell and inform'd him of some things touching 68 Post office affairs, and recommending Wills (from his care and anxiety to perform his contract) for the Southern ride to Savannah. Wrote to Mr Robertson of George Town with further directions concerning his office.

The rider between this place and Newbern represented to me this day that he cannot continue in the service unless his wages are augmented. I told him that I should give him an answer after I had consulted with Mr Hooper and had examin'd the road.

19th.—Employ'd in reading over a correspondence between Mr Hooper and Mr Roupell concerning sundry matters to be settled here and at Newbern.

20th.—At the Post office. In consequence of the insight obtain'd from the above correspondence, and Mr Hoopers explanation of matters, I got a perfect knowledge of an affair that is to be settled with Mr Davis at Newbern; he contracted with the Post-office to forward the mails between Wilmington and Newbern; he gave it up on the 31st of August, 1771, as appears by his letter to Mr Hooper of that date, after which time Mr H. did a actually enter into contract with one named Shepherd, who has continued in the service ever since. Davis claims payment for the riding work in consequence of his agreement with

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Mr Delancy, altho' he gave up his contract in August, 1771, and has not employ'd any rider since except for one month.

Mr Davis is debtor to the General Post office for the monies he received during the time he acted as Deputy at Newbern; he never transmitted 69 any account, it is my business to bring him to a settlement, I have for that end desir'd Mr Hooper the deputy here to give me an extract from his books of all the letters forwarded by him to the office at Newbern, during the time Mr Davis acted.

20th.—The Rider shou'd come through Brunswick in his way from Charles Town to this place; it is the port of entry for this town 15 miles nearer the sea. It will make the way longer, but being a trading town, and the only port of entry for all places on Cape Fear River, there shou'd certainly be a Post-office there were it only to receive the ship letters for Wilmington and the places adjacent.

Many letters come into this Port for Newbern, Edenton and all parts of the Province; the Masters of vessels throw 'em perhaps carelessly into a Tavern, there being no Post office to take them in; the complaints against this practice are loud for many letters are thus lost. The Merchants therefor Pray to have an office established at Brunswick, that all ship letters may be put on shore there that they may be certain of receiving them.

There is a growing place a hundred miles above this Town, called Cross Creek; there's much commercial connection between the Merchants here, and those settled there, they therefor wish for a weekly Post between the Two Towns of Wilmington and Cross Creek.

It is impossible to do anything to Purpose towards establishing a regular Post in the Southern district, on an advantageous footing to the Revenue, until the mails are conveyed weekly without stops or delays all through Virginia, and so South along thro' North Carolina all the way to Charles Town.

Library of Congress

At present it is long before an answer can be had between Charles Town 70 and New York (they say it requires ten weeks) that no body in either of these two places thinks of writing by Post; so that in short the Post in the Southern district is of no benefit to Revenue and but of very little use to the Publick in its present state, but would be of infinite utility if it were once so regulated as to convey letters from New York to Charles Town in 16, 18 or 20 days. This may be done, then woul'd answers be had in five or six weeks, and correspondence by Post wou'd be preferr'd to precarious conveyances by water.

I found that it is a confirmed opinion at Charles Town, that letters sent by Post are seldom deliver'd owing to some mismanagement at the Junction of the Northern and Southern districts; but it is not publickly known, that there's a Post for the Northward every fortnight.

Mr Hooper wrote letters to Boston and sent them by Post, on purpose to see if the report was well founded; he says they never got to hand.

No Post office plan can be properly carried on in this part of the world without men versed in business with a certain share of the esteem of the people will take it in hand, and very few will take the trouble without an equivalent for their pains.

Every Deputy shou'd have an office, for when the publick sees letters thrown carelessly about in an open room or store, for every comer to handle it is natural to conclude and it is accordingly concluded that letters are not safe under a deputy's care. When I spoke to the deputy's about this irregularity, they one and all said, we have much trouble with the post, we cannot set apart an office, we receive the letters into our houses to oblige the Publick, and as for the Commission it is such a trifle it is not worth accepting, we cannot neglect our affairs to give more attention to this 71 matter. The publick good is the sole inducement for taking so much trouble as we do.

I think that if a small allowance were made to each deputy in this district, proportion'd to his Trouble, that it wou'd be for the benefit of the Revenue. I would allow from £5 to £20 Str.

Library of Congress

[???] ann. to the Deputys and oblige them to have a place in their houses or stores, set apart as an office, to which no person shou'd have access but such as may have taken the oaths of a Post officer.

I would have a weekly Post from Town to Town and as soon as a regular and speedy conveyance is properly fix'd from New York to Charles Town, I wou'd advertise it in England, in all the Coffee houses and Publick places in every Trading city and Town, and in all the newspapers in Britain during many months; likewise in the newspapers, Almanacks and Registers published in America.

By this means it wou'd be found, that, every year after the first or second, there will be an amazing encrease of the Revenue.

After three or four years, the mode of paying deputys may be altered, if necessary.

Frequent application has been made to Mr Hooper for a weekly Post, between this place and Newbern; he thinks that it wou'd defray its own expence.

21st.—At the office with Mr Hooper; it appears that he has taken much pains to keep up the riding work, and to instruct other deputys. His books are in a form given him by the late Mr Delancey. I do not approve of it. They shou'd, adopt the Northward form in everything, except in entering the letters in 4 columns, Sing: Doub: Tr: Pack't and 72 pennyweights, instead of which say so many letters (reducing them all to singles) at so much [???] amounting to so many shillings Str.

The Southern rider is irregular; his stage is too long; he shou'd arrive on Sunday evening and return towards Charles Town on Monday. Every thing is neat and in order with Mr. Hooper, who seems to be a Gentleman in every sense of the word; he is a great acquisition to the office in this part of the world. The Northern rider is punctual, but he will not take the oath nor will he give bond. The reason is obvious he makes something by way letters; no person can be found in this place or at Newbern except the present

Library of Congress

rider, for that reason I dare not press him, else the riding work would stop, or we should be oblig'd to pay perhaps triple the sum to another; on his return from Newbern, I will do my endeavour to renew the contract with him, and if possible, engage him to take the oath and give bond. It is exceeding difficult to find riders in North Carolina.

Mr Hooper deliver'd to me a great parcel of Post-office accounts rendered by Mr Hewis Deputy at Edenton, to be rectify'd and settled by me, with him.

Mr Hewis is a man of the best character, a Gentleman of merit (as is said) who has taken charge of the Post office solely to serve the Publick; as I am informed the trouble at his office is great for all the letters for any office to the Southward of Virginia are sent to Suffolk, the last office in the Northern district, and from thence they are sent in one parcel unassorted to Edenton, the most Northerly Office in the Southern District, and Mr Hewis is obliged to sort them, and make them up in different mails.

By a very erroneous form which the former Secretary Mr John Stevens sent to all the Deputys as a rule to walk by, he has been led to charge commission on the amount of all letters passing through his hands as well 73 those he forwards to other offices, as those in his own delivery. I will shew him that this is uncustomary and was never charged; nor allow'd to any deputy.

I am aware that he may plead that he was directed so to do, but as he is a gentlemen I hope to settle the matter easily.

Mr Hooper pays the Northern rider, Henry Shepherd, £65 Proc. [???] ann., equal to £36.11.3 Str., the distance is 93 miles, this he performs once in 14 days, from one place to the other and back again.

On the 22d.—Took an account of the letters sent to Newbern and to George Town from this office, to enable me to ascertain Davis's and Dr. Tyghe's debts to the General Post-office.

Library of Congress

23d.—Sunday.

24th and 25th.—In company hear'd it regreted that there was no safety in sending any thing to the Northward, by Post, to the great inconveniency of the people in trade in those parts.

Mr Hogg, one of the principal merchants in this place remitted the first and second of a set of bills of Exchange by Post to Philadelphia; they never got to hand, a coaster carried the third bill safe.

Many instances of the insecurity of the conveyance by Post have been given in my presence; all that I have been able to say in answer to these matters was, that I was commissioned to put the Posts on the best footing, that in my Survey I shou'd put every thing to right; that I suspected some mismanagement at the Junction of the Northern and Southern district, which I shoul'd undoubtedly rectify.

74

26th.—Learnt the story of the bad causeway leading to this place, and over which the Post passes in danger of life two miles. Publick report is, that the Governor and Province granted the ferry to Colonel William Dry for ever, on condition that he and his heirs should make and keep in good repair a high way thro' the Swampy Island before mention'd. The Colonel finds that he made a hard bargain, and he does not attempt to mend the road; he has been indicted more than once, yet the road is still bad. The King's attorney (his son in Law) has not yet prosecuted, tho' the world calls fye, and every person passing and repassing is in danger of breaking a leg or an arm, yet from year to year it is complain'd of and yearly grows worse. I wrote to Colonel Dry on the strength of an introductory letter I had to the Colo., begging of him to recommend a careful person at Brunswick to take charge of a Post office there. I did intend to go down myself, but the effects of my ride from Charles Town, had render'd it painful for me to sit or walk.

Library of Congress

27th.—Colonel Dry very politely and obligingly wrote that in case he cou'd find nobody to take charge of the office he wou'd take care of it, until a proper person cou'd be found.

Mr Hooper at my request wrote to Mr Lord the former Post Master in Brunswick, begging him to accept of a Commission. For a reason not assign'd (but be it what it wou'd it must have been a bad one) the Post was order'd not to pass thro' Brunswick in Mr Delancey's time. Mr Lord has answer'd that he is ready to act, whenever he shall be properly authorised so to do, on condition that a small allowance be made to him for his attendance and for office rent. The letters sent from his office will be many, the Postage received by him a trifle. I shall recommend it to Mr 75 Roupell to comply with his request, as it will be of advantage to the Revenue, and will give satisfaction to the Trading body in this place.

28th, 29th, 30th. At the Hermitage a few miles from Town where I met many of the merchants, and Gentlemen planters. The improvement of the Post was often talk'd of, my endeavour was on all occasions to assure the Publick, that it was the command of His Majesty's Post Master General to put the American Posts on the best footing possible, and that for that end solely was I sent among them.

31st.—I made a proposal to Mr Boyd, the printer, to carry his Papers by post to Cross Creek, a place already mentioned, once a fortnight.

The Newbern Post arriv'd regularly as he always does; the Charles Town Post not yet arriv'd tho' this is the day appointed, for that riders arrival.

Wilmington .

February the first. Mr Boyd, the printer, proposes to ride up to Cross Creek, and as soon as he knows how many papers he can send, he will make an offer of a sum to the office for carrying them.

Library of Congress

The Northern rider has made a claim for extra expences for detention past the time fix'd for his departure; he waited for the arrival of the Charles Town rider until 3 o'clock; he said he was detain'd by the ferry men from George Town over the Bay, and his horse tired. Three changes are scarce sufficient for this ride.

76

Saw Colonel Dry, and thank'd him for his obliging offer to serve the office.

Wrote a long letter on Post-office affairs to Mr Roupell, particularly of Brunswick and Cross Creek.

2d.—Ordered the Southern rider always to bring certificate of his having been detain'd and by whom, or what means.

3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th.—Waiting Mr Lord's arrival from Brunswick in consequence of his promise to wait on me to receive my answer to his proposal to Mr Hooper, but seeing that he came not, and having recover'd of my bruises, I intend to set out to morrow, as the people are very impatient to see a post establish'd between this and Brunswick.

7th.—Set out for Brunswick to survey the road, and to fix matters with Mr Lord. I have wrote to Mr Roupell for a commission for him.

The bad causeway already mention'd lies in the way; after the two ferrys there's 13 miles of pretty good road, tho' some parts of it are heavy sand, all the way through a miserably poor pine barren.

Mr Lord went by water in the morning to Wilmington to meet me, his wife said that he wou'd not fail to return immediately on finding that I was here to see him, I therefore determined to wait his return.

Library of Congress

8th.—Deliver'd to Mr Hill, the Deputy Collector of this Port, a printed abstract from the act of the V of Geo: III concerning ship letters; he said he wou'd pay due observance to it.

77

9th, 10th. Mr Lord not return'd return'd; I then concluded that he was waiting for my return to Wilmington, and I left Brunswick; on my arrival at Mr Hoopers, I found that Mr Lord had left Town about an hour.

11th, 12th.—Writing duplicates of my last letters to Mr Todd to be sent by the first vessel from hence to England.

13th.—Sunday.

14th.—The Southern and the Northern rider arrived here punctually and met at the office about ten in the morning, altho' the two last days were very wet; the Charles Town post came by way of Brunswick; I had no letters from Mr Roupell in answer to my two last to him on office business; I know not if he has as yet appointed Mr Lord to be Deputy at Brunswick, and I am ignorant of his intention concerning the Cross Creek proposal of which I wrote fully the first of this month.

15th.—Wrote to Mr. Roupell and to Mr Lord on office business.

16th, 17th, 18th.—Waiting Mr Lords answer to my last letter.

19th.—Receiv'd a letter from Mr Lord, enclosing one from Mr Roupell, which came under his cover by the last post. Mr Roupell is very full in answer to mine concerning the Brunswick and Cross Creek Posts; Mr Lord excuses himself for keeping back this letter, thus, "He intended "to follow the post to Wilmington; having received his Commission, his "intention was, to take the oath in my presence and to give Bond before 78 "me; he was taken ill on the road and oblig'd to return," and he adds, "That he will be up in a few days to receive instruction from me."

Library of Congress

Sunday 20th, or

Monday 21st.—Return'd answer to Mr Lord that I wou'd wait for him, and desir'd him in the meantime to look out for a person to carry the ship letters between Brunswick and Wilmington. A good negro will do the business.

Leave Brunswick every Monday

return on Tuesday

Come up to Wilmington Wednesday

return on Thursday

Up again on Friday

down to Brunswick Saturday

Rest on Sunday.

By this foot post, Wilmington will have constant communication with Brunswick, the Port.

22d, 23, and 24th waiting for Mr Lord.

25th.—Received a letter from him which marks no kind of intention to be up, but raising difficulties about the dayly runner propos'd in my last. I think it is very necessary to go down to settle this matter.

26th.—Left Wilmington and arriv'd at Brunswick early, went to Mr 79 Lord, heard the oath administer'd to him and saw him sign the bond, both which I took into my possession. I instructed him in his duty.

Library of Congress

He cannot find a boy for less than £30 Proc. [???] ann. to go even twice a week, Mondays and Thursdays £30 Proc. is equal to £16.17.6 Str.

The Collector and Comptroller promise once again not to admit any vessel to entry without the Post Masters certificate.

Delivered at Mr Lord's office, blanks which I got printed at Wilmington, viz. certificates for Ship Masters and Post Masters bills, also a parcel of abstracts of the act of the V of Geo: III, with a preamble, to be shown by the Pilots to Masters of vessels.

Having fixed Mr Lord in his office, and done all that appear'd necessary to be done, I took my leave. He is to forward all ship letters by express, until a stated regular conveyance shall be fixed; each express will cost but a Trifle considering the number of letters he will carry, it is necessary to shew much speed at first, the encouragement to carry this scheme through is great, as every merchant declares that his Captain shall put their letters into the office at Brunswick. In the evening the Charles Town Post arrived, and brought letters [???] the Nov'r Packet; there was none for me; this determines me to proceed to New Bern after a conference with Mr Hooper.

28th.—Mr Hooper proposes to hire a negroe boy to go down to Brunswick twice a week; this service he thinks may be perform'd for £12 or £15 Proc. [???] ann.

Set out in the afternoon for New Bern in a very sultry day, 'tis reckoned 93 miles distant. From this day until the Tuesday following, on the road to Newbern. In the memory of the oldest man living there has not been 80 such heavy rains nor of so long continuance. The whole country is over-flow'd, all the bridges are carried away, every brook is swelled to a deep impassable river, in short we are here prisoners in a country Tavern.

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With infinite difficulty, and no small risk of being drown'd in passing the rivers in flats (a kind of boat very ill calculated for passing the rivers in their present state, for they run like mill sluices) we got to Newbern.

8th of March, and waited immediately on Governor Martin.

9th.—Saw the Deputy Mr Dowce, who told me that he cou'd not attend to any business during the sitting of the assembly; I also saw Mr Hewes of Edenton (Member for that place) who takes charge of the office there; we talk'd office matters over.

One Mr Macnair from Halifax on Roanoke represents, that if the mails were forwarded from Virginia that way to the Southward, two wide and dangerous ferrys wou'd be avoided, and that it wou'd not be farther about; but in this case what becomes of Edenton.

25th.—From my arrival have not been able to do any Post office business as Mr Dowce was otherwise employ'd and cou'd not attend. He informs me to day that his business as a Surgeon makes it impossible for him to give the requisite attendance and attention to the Post office and therefor he begs that a deputy may be appointed in his stead.

I intend to examine the road from hence to Halifax and from thence down to Edenton and examine the road from that place to Newbern; and after a settlement of Post office affairs return to Halifax and Survey the road from thence to Suffolk in Virginia.

81

Mr. Dowce agrees to keep the office until my return from Halifax.

26th.—Left Newbern. Rode 8 miles to Bachelors creek over which there's a bridge; it is now down but will be rebuilt in a few days, 20 miles farther Swifts creek, the bridge in the same way, 15 miles farther put up at a Tavern.

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27th.—A mile farther crossed Tar River 200 yards wide in a fine flat, by going round a mile or so, and keeping the banks of the river near, one can pass over a bridge 30 miles higher up at a village called Tarborough.

We proceeded 14 miles and cross'd a bridge over Conetaw Creek and 31 miles farther lodged at a miserable hut.

28th.—Proceeded 16 miles farther to a creek easily to be pass'd at all times and 8 miles farther sometimes over rising grounds to

Halifax.

The road all the way is a hard dry sand. This place contains about 50 houses, stores are kept here to supply the country round with European and West India Commodities for which Pork, Tobacco, Indian corn, Wheat and Lumber are taken in return. The distance from this place to Newbern is 115 miles.

Travellers from the Northward to Charles Town generally pass this way to avoid the ferrys over Albemarle and Pamlico sounds. This Town is distant from Suffolk in Virginia 75 miles, and the same distance from Petersburg.

As there's no established post between any Town in Virginia and Halifax 82 they employ a private rider to bring their letters from Williamsburgh once a week, this rider passes through Petersburg.

The people here wish to have this made a Post Town in the route of the Post to Charles Town. I shall be a better Judge of the propriety of changing this route after having passed between Edenton and Newbern.

29th, 30th and 31st March, 1st, 2d and 3d April at Halifax.

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4th April, left that place, and the 9th got to Edenton. We cross'd the Roanoke at Halifax 200 yds. wide in a fine flat, at a place called Windsor, we cross'd Salmon creek and we cross'd Chowan after a gale of wind which detain'd us two days at the ferry house, the ferry from Dawsons to Town is 8 miles. From Halifax to Edenton is 90 Miles. Edenton is the most Northerly Post Town in the Southern district, distant about 30 miles from the line dividing Virginia from North Carolina, and 55 from Suffolk, in a fine road. This place has but little intercourse with great Britain, but it has great trading connection with the West Indies. The Town contains 160 houses and about 1000 souls Whites and Blacks. The ferry over the Sound of Albemarle occasions many delays to the Post when an Easterly wind blows; or when the wind is strong at West, it is impassable for the Passage boats, which are none of the best.

Mr Hewes was in the country, and did not return to Town before the 12th. He has no office set apart but receives the letters in his compting house, and one of his clerks delivers them.

He inform'd me that tho' he had remitted his accounts, they were yet unsettled, and he demanded time to make them out for me (ever since he had charge of the office) and promised to deliver them by the 18th.

83

He was punctual to the time; by the State. deliver'd, there appear'd a balance of £26 Str. due to him; I examin'd them, found them without error and drew a bill on Alex'r Colden Esq'r, Comptroller of the Post office at New York, for that sum in his favour.

It is to be observed, that the money receiv'd by Mr Hewes for Postage, never paid the Commission charg'd by him. As has been mention'd before, Mr Delancy sent him a Form by which to model and keep his accounts, he pointedly observed that form, and charged 20 [??] ct. as well on all letters passing thro' his hands if sent from other offices, as on the money received for letters in the delivery of his office. All letters for any office to the

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Southward or Northward of him were sent to him, on these he charged commission, and thus his commissions amounted to more than the moneys received at his office and every quarter there arose a balance to him.

If he had remitted a regular quarterly account to Mr Roupell, he wou'd have check'd him and sent him a proper form, but he never sent any before July 1773.

As soon as Mr Roupell received them he informed him of his errors, and employ'd Mr Hooper Deputy at Wilmington to put him to right, but Mr Hewes insisted on his being right, and so in fact he was, for he followed exactly the instructions given him. Thus the affair now stands; and I find that it wou'd be a hardship on Mr Hewes to make him give up his claim, even if I could, it has been nothing to him, one of his clerks had the profits. By insisting on this matter the office wou'd lose a careful officer, a man of sense and Character, who will do every thing in his power to advance the interests of the office.

For these reasons I settled the affair with him by paying the old balance, 84 and on his part he will observe the proper form, charging only 20 [???] ct. on the amount of postage received by him, which will be but a mere trifle.

The Post days at Edenton are as follows.

The Post from Suffolk arrives on Wednesday at noon once every fortnight very regularly.

The mail for the Southward lies at this office until the Friday in the week following.

The rider from Bath Town arrives here on that day with the mail from the Southward, and carries back to Bath the letters for the Southward, which have lain so long here.

The mail brought by the Bath rider lies here from Friday until Monday, when they are sent to Suffolk by Mr Hewes's rider, who returns to this place on Wednesday at noon with the mail from the Northward, and so on continually.

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The letters for the Southward lose ten days here, and those for the Northward lose three. Perhaps in former times letters may have been lost at this place, there's no apartment appropriated for their reception, they lie loose in an open counting house, and lie for a long time. At present there is an appearance of care. But were all Post Masters to put up their letters in a proper manner, and direct each parcel for the office of delivery, much trouble would be saved to this office; and there would be less risk of losing letters, yet risk there will always be until each Deputy provides a place for his letters to which no person may have access but such as have taken the oath.

Mr Hewes pays £26 Str. [??] ann. for riding work between Edenton and Suffolk.

85

19th.—Cross'd over Albemarle Sound from Edenton to the opposite Shore 12 miles, it is often impassable for days it renders it inconvenient for a Post route.

20th.—Proceeded to Bath in a level firm road thro' a very poor country, it is a small insignificant place on Pamlico River. William Brown the deputy does not receive 40 s. [??] ann. for Postage in this place; he never kept a book, he has his accounts of receipts of Postage on scraps of Paper, by the time that I return on my way to Virginia he will have his account made out.

He contracts with the Office for carrying the mails once a fortnight between Newbern & Edenton for which service he has £46 Str. [??] annum.

He says the distance from Newbern to Bath 51 miles

from Bath to Edenton ferry 42

93

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Mr Roupell instructed me to reduce the price of this ride if possible, and to bring it on the footing of the ride between Newbern and Wilmington an equal distance, but Mr Brown wou'd not hearken to this proposal. He says he must give it up if any thing is taken off.

Post days from Bath.

The rider sets out on Thursday once a fortnight, and he arrives at Edenton with the Southern mail on Friday, if the wind permits him to cross over Albemarle sound a passage of 12 miles.

There he leaves the mail from the Southward and takes up the mail from the Northward, and arrives with it at Bath on Sunday morning; this mail lies at Bath until Friday (losing 5 days) when they are dispatched for 86 Newbern, and there arrive on the evening of that day, and there he exchanges mails, and returns to Bath on Sunday morning, where these letters lie until Thursday (losing 4 days) and thus the round is kept up.

The Province pays the ferry men double fare for passing His Majestys Couriers; by this means the Post is never detained at ferrys when there's a possibility of passing.

21st.—Cross'd from Bath over Pamlico 5 miles, the ferry boats are not very good. From this river to Neuse ferry opposite to New Bern is 38 miles good road, except 3 or 4 miles nearest Neuse ferry it is a heavy sand, the ferry is a mile over and the boat is very bad.

From the 22d April to the 6th May settled accounts with Mr Dowse, who resign'd his office.

Mr Tomlinson succeeds him as Deputy Post Master, I instructed him in his duty, gave him forms, &c., and I shew'd him how to make up the mails, and enter them in his books after which I left New Bern on the 17th in the intention to visit and examine the road from Halifax to Suffolk in Virginia.

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At Halifax I spoke with Mr William Martin (one recommended by the principal people in Town) about taking charge of an office in case one shou'd be established here; he is willing to accept of a Commission.

16th.—Cross'd the Roanoke and rode 41 miles to Wynton a small Town on Chowan River, fifty miles from the mouth.

17th.—Cross'd Chowan in a fine skow, the river may be 150 yds. wide here. Road by Sommerton a small village of no note to Suffolk 34 miles:

87

The road is in general good; in some places there's loose heavy sand.

The present Route of the mails for the Southward beginning at Williamsburgh will measure thus,

From Williamsburgh to Norfolk 54 miles

N.B. This includes a ferry of 18 miles.

From Norfolk to Suffolk 28

To Edenton 55

To Newbern including two ferrys, one of 5 and the other of 12 miles 93

— 230

The proposed Route to avoid the Ferrys will be

From Williamsburg to Petersburg 75 miles

Petersburg to Halifax 75

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Halifax to New Bern 115

265

Difference 35

The difference between the two roads appears to be 35 miles in favor of the present route, but by the other way there's no tedious ferrys, there's 37 miles of water in the road the post now goes, three tedious difficult ferry's very often impassable.

88

A View of the progress of His Majestys mails from the time that the Post leaves Charles Town in South Carolina until his arrival at Suffolk in Virginia.

The Post leaves Charles Town of a Wednesday and arrives at number of miles rode Day of the arrival of the mails at the different stages number of days on the road days the mails are at rest By this it appears that the mails are 27 days on the road between Charles Town and Suffolk in which time they travel 433 mile which is but 16 miles [???] day. It is here shewn that the letters lie bye 16 days at different offices. George Town 60 Friday 3 Brunswick 115 Sunday 5 Wilmington 15 Monday 6 New Bern 93 Thursday 9 9 Bath 43 Sunday 19 4 Edenton 52 Friday 24 3 Suffolk 55 Monday 27 27 433 16

The Tardiness of the post discourages correspondence by his Majesty's mails to and from the Southern district.

From what I have heard said in the Carolinas on the subject of the Posts, it is my opinion that if there were a regular weekly post establish'd from Town to Town in the Southern district, correspondence wou'd encrease much; and to avoid delays, the route shou'd be changed and the Mails for Petersburg, Halifax, Tarborough, Newbern, Wilmington, Brunswick, Geo: Town and Charles Town, be sent the upper road, from New Castle or Williamsburg.

89

NORTHERN DISTRICT. 17th MAY 1774.

Suffolk is the most Southerly Town in the Northern District; the letters are deliv'd here in the store of the first merchant in the place, by Thomas Bell one of the clerks; there is no office, but the letters are carefully lock'd up. Mr Bell has no commission, he keeps his books neatly and in proper form; he has had charge of the office only four months. A Mr Stott had charge of it in this place formerly, at his death he owed the Post office £37.15.8d. Virginia money which I received from Mr Bell; I enquir'd into the state of the accounts since Stotts death. I found that one Fleming had been appointed in May 1772, he left Suffolk in January 1773 and put the books and office Papers into the hands of Robert McMurdo, and he gave every thing up to Mr Bell excepting his account and papers from which an account cou'd be made out. As I had no account of the balances due to the General Post office, I cou'd not ascertain the sums due by Fleming and McMurdo the first lives in Norfolk, the other in the West Indies.

Mr Bell observes that he has a very great deal of trouble and no equivalent for the time and attention that he is obliged to give the Post office affairs.

He says, that all letters from the Northward for any place Southward of Suffolk are sent to him, and he is oblig'd to make them into mails and 90 forward them to their directions; now if the Post Masters to the Northward were to make up their mails regularly, and send them properly, the officer at Suffolk could have no more trouble than any other officer has.

To the Southward I have instructed all Post Masters to make up mails for the different offices, and as I pass along to the Northward I shall give the like directions to the Post Masters, tho' in general they are ignorant of the situations of places. For this reason,

Let every Post Master return to the Surveyor, the names of all the places of note within his delivery, that they may be printed and left at each office as a directory to the Post office.

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For instance Milners and Richmond are places of trade where there's no office; a Post Master at Baltimore ill in Maryland or Quebec in Canada may not know to what place in Virginia to send letters directed to these places, but looking into the book proposed to be printed he wou'd find under letter M *Milners* in *Virginia* in the delivery of SUFFOLK.

The Post from the Northward arrives here every Tuesday afternoon.

From the Southward every other Tuesday.

The Northward Post returns every Wednesday.

The Southern post returns every other Wednesday.

Letters for the Southward lie in this office 8 days, I mean such as arrive here on the week before the Southern Post comes in.

The receipt at this office does not exceed £8 [???] quarter consequently the Post Masters Salary is but about £6 yearly. There's no rider paid at this office.

The rider between Edenton and Suffolk is paid by Mr Hewes. Negro riders are often employed, they can take no oath.

91

18th.—Proceed to *Norfolk* 28 miles in a fine road. It stands on Elizabeth now called Norfolk River a quarter or half a mile in breadth. Portsmouth is on the opposite side from whence there's a good ferry. At Portsmouth a small Town there's a branch of the Suffolk office.

19th.—Saw Mr Parker under whose eye the office is kept by Alexander Diack his clerk, the letters here as at Suffolk are deliver'd in the Store or warehouse. Mr Diack keeps his books and accounts in a neat and regular manner.

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The receipt at this office is £100 Str. yearly, 20 [???] cent on that sum the Deputy's Salary amounts to £20. The Northern Post arrives on Sunday at noon. He sets out for Suffolk Southward, on Tuesday. The mail returns towards Williamsburg Northw'd Thursday. The rider from Suffolk is punctual, but the riders from the other hand are rather irregular, because that Hampton the office next to Norfolk thro' which all the northern letters come, is seperated from it by the junction of James River and Elizabeth or Norfolk River 18 miles; there's no Post boat, and the mail is sent over from Hampton in the first passage boat offering, in charge of the Negroe ferry men; if no passengers offer from Hampton to Norfolk, the ferryman will not send a boat on purpose to carry the mail, nothwithstanding the act of the IX of Queen Anne, relative to ferrys; at this time it would be unadvisable to try an affair of this kind in any court in America; this ferry as before observed is 18 miles over; there's one in Virginia of 60 over Chesapeak Bay when the act was made, it is likely that they did not advert to the hardship of a man's being obliged to carry a Post rider over such wide ferrys, for nothing. Would it not be equitable to pay for these 92 ferry's the same sum that is paid for conveying a mail the same distance by land?

The rider between Norfolk and Suffolk is paid £25 Virg'a money [???] ann.

This office accounts with Williamsburg.

Hampton's the Port of entry for Norfolk, the masters of ships entering there, seldom deliver their letters at the Post office at this place; if any letters are brought up in the Vessel they are thrown down on a Table in a Tavern or Coffee house, for every man to pick out his own.

It is here said that the mails from the Northward are brought to them in a round about tedious way, and the people complain of it as a grievance.

They say that by the way of the Eastern shore of Maryland, Philadelphia is but 248 miles distant, and the present Post route is 400. It is agreed that the Bay of Chesapeak may be

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at times a great hindrance to the Post's speed this way, yet 'tis allow'd in general that the shortness of the route far outweighs that objection for the boats that ply across the bay are very fine, and will never be stop'd thrice in a year by bad weather. By this route they can have their advices 8 days sooner than by the present post road. It is also said there are many counties, on the Eastern shore, unaccomodated with Posts; Trading countys to encrease the revenue. The deputy show'd me letters that had been lying for sometime in the office, directed for the Collector and Comptroller of Accomack, but he had no way of forwarding them.

I saw Mr Fleming, the former deputy of Suffolk, he says he put all these affairs into McMurdo's possession, and he is gone to the West Indies; so that this debt whatever it may be appears desperate, for Fleming is a poor man.

93

23d.—Embark'd in a passage boat, and was 5 hours in getting over to *Hampton* , a small Town, the Port of entry for Norfolk and Suffolk.

I have already observed that the mails from Williamsburg &c. for all parts South of Hampton are put on board the passage boat that first offers for Norfolk after the Posts arrival; it sometimes happens that no passengers offer for a day or two, in that case the letters remain in Hampton too long to be forwarded from Norfolk by the Southern post; thus the Suffolk merch't and all Towns in the Post route have their letters detain'd from eight to fourteen days.

On the other side, the mails from the Carolinas are detain'd at Norfolk, when no ferry boat offers, so that before they arrive at Hampton the rider is gone for York and Williamsburg, thus 8 days are lost on this side; let it be observed that this does not happen frequently. Mr Francis Riddle-hurst is deputy at Hampton, he also accounts with the Post office at Williamsburg, the receipt here is a mere trifle, not £10 currency [???] ann. If the collector of this, and every Port on the Continent were to do their duty, refusing to admit vessels

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to entry without producing the Post Masters certificate, I am positive that the good effects wou'd soon be felt, it wou'd further the interest of the merchant and encrease the Revenue. I left an abstract of the V of Geo: III with the Collector.

There's no office set apart here, but things are kept in good order.

The post arrives here from the Northward every Saturday. He returns to York and Williamsburg every Friday. When a Ship Master delivers his letters here, those for the Northward if it happens not on a Post day, are sent by Express, to Williamsburg, by that means this office pays more than it receives.

94

Proceeded 24 miles in a fine road to *York* .

Next day, the 24th, Saw the deputy Mr Allan Jones; this is the Port of entry for Hanover, New Castle, and all parts of York river. This office accounts to Williamsburg. He has no place set apart for the delivery and receipt of letters.

He receives about £14 yearly, but as at Hampton, it w'd increase if ship letters were deliver'd to him, at least the revenue wou'd encrease, by the inland post of such letters. I left several abstracts from the act concerning ship letters, with him.

The Post arrives here from the Northward on Saturday.

The Post from the Southward arrives on a Friday.

Mr Jones informs me that he was induced to accept of the care of the office here, that he might be exempted from serving on Jurys or as a Militia man but he has found that the exemption sent him is no protection. The Militia court martials have fin'd him thrice; these fines he has paid rather than give up a claim founded on His Majestys Royal proclamation.

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He says that at this time there's an execution against him to levy fines for refusing twice to serve as a Juryman.

He wrote to the Governor, The Earl of Dunmore in Dec'r last respectfully representing his case; but he has had no Answer.

Unless the Judges of the different courts in America will pay regard to the Exemption in question no person will accept of a deputation from the Deputy Post-Masters General.